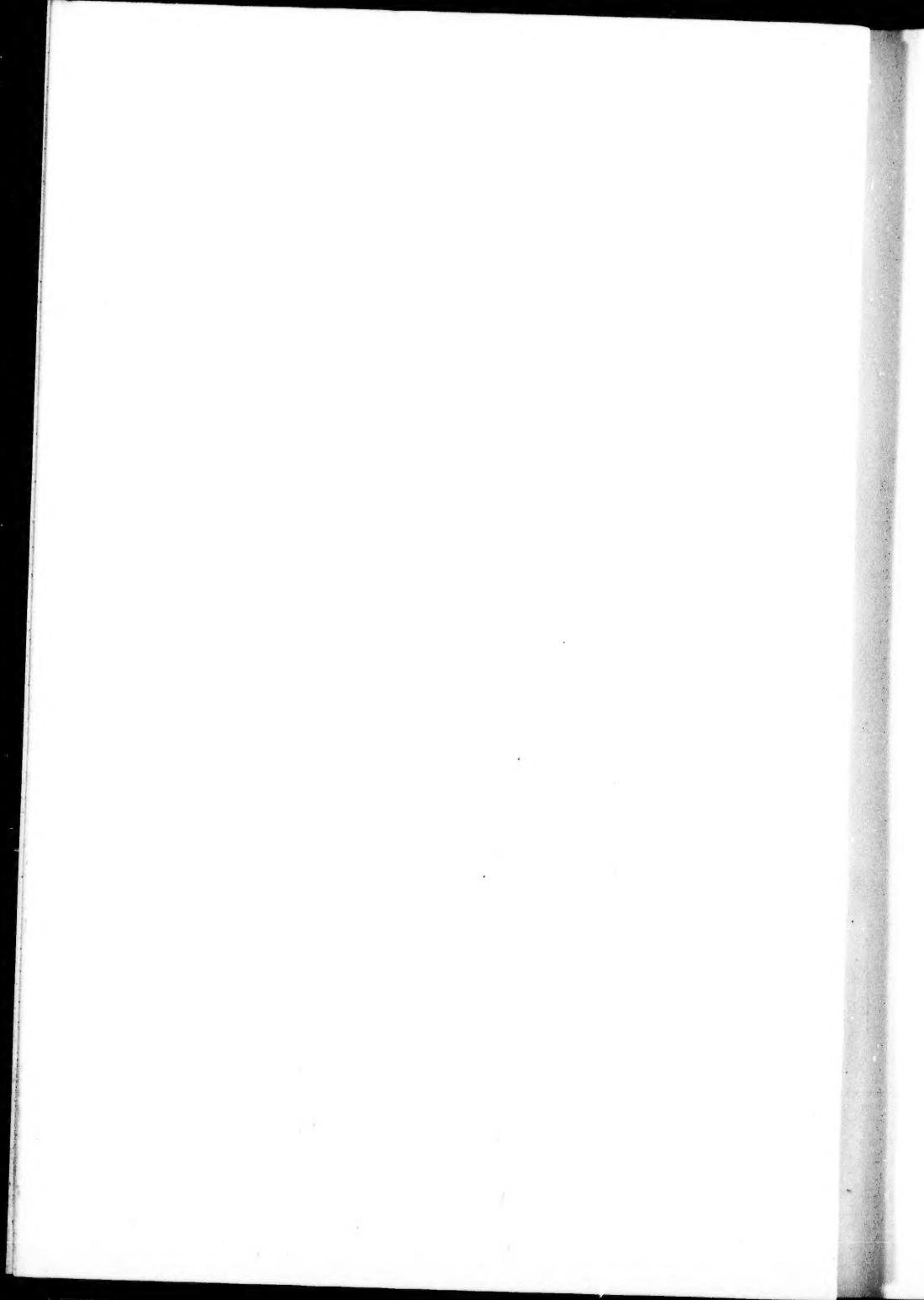
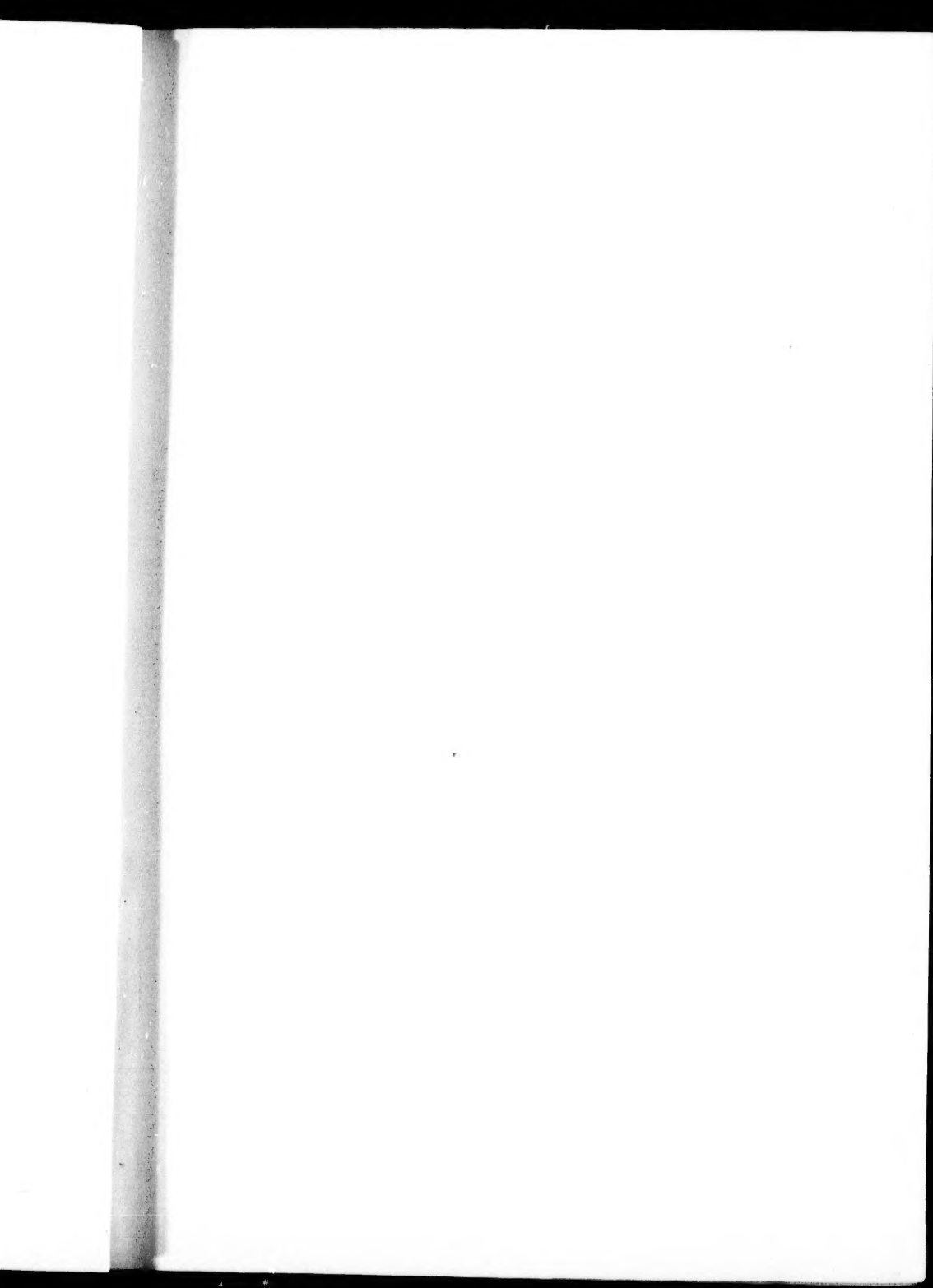


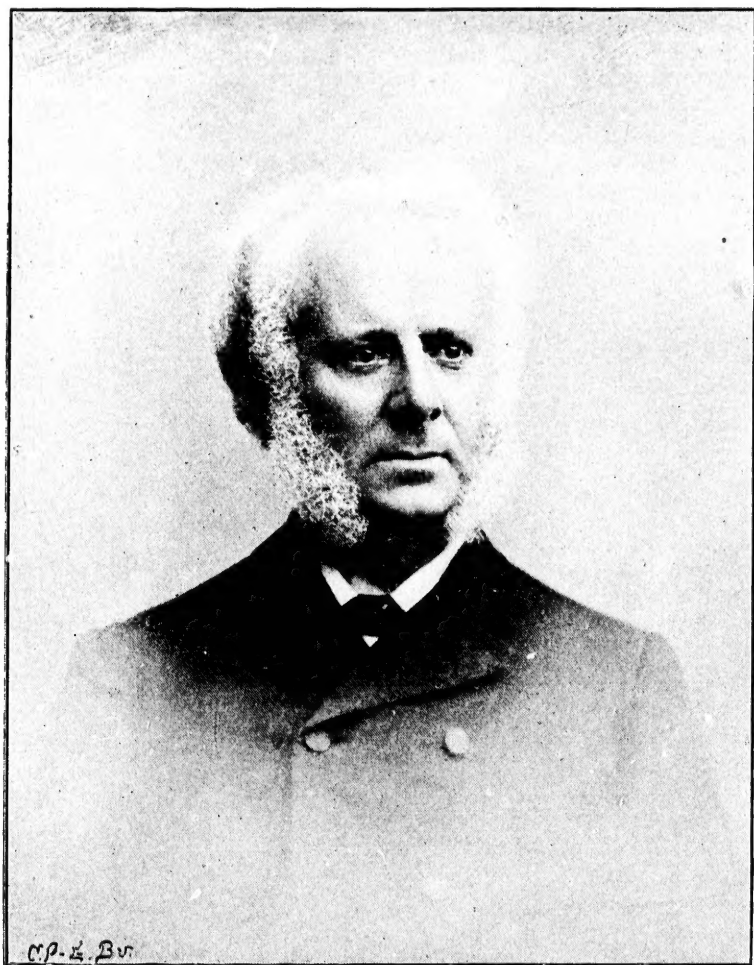
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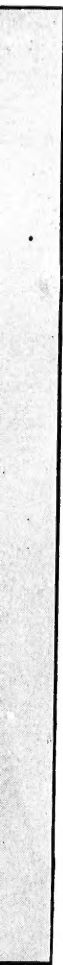
SELECTED SERMONS AND LECTURES.







WILLIAM STEPHENSON.



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SELECTED

SERMONS AND LECTURES

BY

THE LATE REV. WM. STEPHENSON.

Collected from his manuscripts by his daughters.

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

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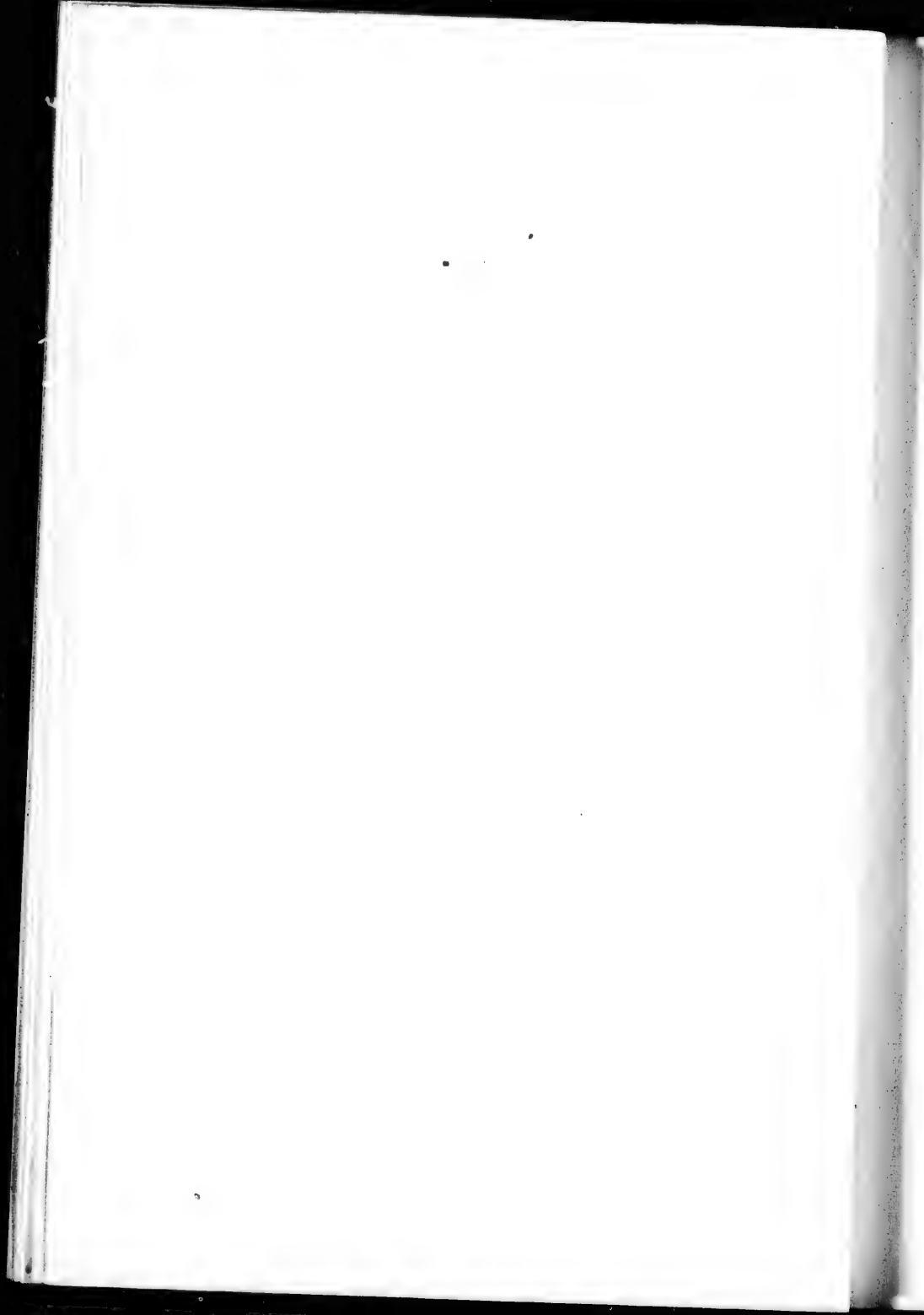
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PREFACE.

THE late Rev. William Stephenson was born in Hull, Yorkshire, England, on July 31st, 1832, but left his native land when quite young and settled in Canada, where he was for many years a minister of the Canadian Methodist Church. In 1880 he moved to New York city, and after a time was called to the pastorate of Rutger's Presbyterian Church, on Madison Avenue. After preaching there three years, owing to failing health, he retired from active work, and spent the remainder of his life at Flushing, Long Island, where he died on October 17th, 1889. Mr. Stephenson's remains rest beside those of his wife, in the lovely little cemetery adjoining the village.

These lectures and short sermons, collected from his manuscripts by his daughters, in loving memory of a dear and honored father, are meant as a souvenir to those who knew him best, of one who was kind and gentle to friends and enemies alike, and whose life was spent in trying to do good.



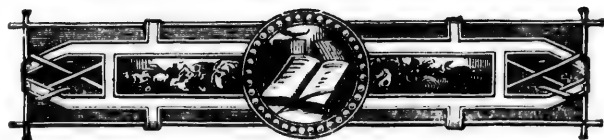


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SERMONS AND LECTURES.

THE ATONEMENT.

“By whom we have now received the Atonement.”—ROM. v. 11.



HE Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ is confessedly the most stupendous event in the history of the universe. It stands alone in its full-orbed presentation of the Deity. More vividly than any other of the “great and marvellous works” of Jehovah it bears the stamp of His eternal power and Godhead. Creation pales its ineffectual fires in the presence of Redemption; and Providence through all its realms of mystery and grandeur yields, in revelation of Divinity, to the mountain and the cross. The Atonement presents us with a matchless conception of the resources of the Infinite, but all concentrated, fixed, absorbed on the salvation of a world. It unfolds in the most unique and glowing combinations

all that in the divine character overwhelms by sublimity, or inspires by beauty. Mercy goes forth in quest of the wretched ; wisdom solves the problem of recovery ; power gathers the shattered wreck of rebellion ; love breathes life into the dead, while all are harmonized, and ennobled, and elevated by the presence of unbending purity. Or may we put it thus : Here justice asserts its claims ; here holiness illustrates its purity ; here power exhibits its might ; here faithfulness performs its promises ; here wisdom puts forth its guidance ; here love opens its most precious stores, and proffers its very strongest pledges, and emits its fairest light, enshrining, as it were, every other attribute in the radiancy of its own illumination, and inscribing its title on the whole name of God—for that “ God is love.” God is indeed glorious—glorious in the works of creation, in the mysteries of Providence, in the lightning’s gleam, in the tempest’s roar, in the flower He pencils, and in the star He guides ; when He stilleth the element, and when He rideth in His chariot of storm ; but the full development of the glory of the eternal was reserved for the mediatorial work, and its most brilliant and purest beams radiate from the cross of His Son. Wrapped in the solitude of its own irrefragable and dimless glory, the fact of the Atonement stands alone and incomparable. Alone in its vindication of eternal majesty, alone in its unfolding of eternal tenderness, alone in its exhibition of eternal rectitude, alone in its lan-

guage, its force, its necessity, its influence, its effects, the one fact high over all, and alone for evermore. As a fact, it swam through the mist and the twilight before the eyes of earliest seers, and brightened with a burning distinctness of tracery before the latest. As a *fact*, it fanned the flames of the Jewish altar, swept the line of type and prophecy, rolled on on the roll of ages, and resounded as the tones of jubilee from generation to generation. As a *fact*, it brightened the centuries of time, fringed the aspects of human destiny, and heaved its tides of influence over all the realms of fallen man. As a *fact*, it gave majesty to promise, meaning to symbol, music to song. As a *fact*, it enchants the visions of hope, strengthens the pinions of faith, opens the portals of the kingdom, and replenishes a bankrupt humanity with the unsearchable riches of Christ. If we may view *one fact* as central and solar in the firmament of revelation, that fact is undoubtedly a *finished* Atonement. Without it hope folds its wings, faith sighs for an object, and man stands cowering on the unsheltered plains of vengeance. Without it salvation is an empty sound; the earth, the heavens, the elements become electrical with wrath, and "our God a consuming fire." To men in all latitudes, through all ages, in every circumstance, it is the one theme dearest, deepest, most touching and most awfully important. Fear, repentance, gratitude, joy and consolation are all connected with it. Heaven as well as earth is full of it, and the "morning stars "

and "ransomed of the Lord" vie in adoring its grandeur and its grace. We approach this theme, noting—

I. *That the doctrine of Atonement is most unequivocally enunciated in the Word of God.*

No one familiar with the teachings of divine truth can, we think, doubt for one moment the propriety of this assertion. The Apostle Paul, in the most powerful and impressive of all language, has set forth the importance and the majesty of this subject: "Justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." And again, in all the force of his unparalled logic he argues, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans v. 10-11). The truth embodied in these quotations, is the one which most thoroughly permeates, pervades and balances the Old and the New Testaments. The sacred writers through all their labyrinth of record, of argument, of petition, of praise, and of adoration, give pre-eminence to the atonement. It is

the truth of all truths—the chiefest among ten thousand, and throws might and glory and the harmony of a perfect repose over all. Of this doctrine the Scripture is full. Isaiah, wrapt in the supernal visions of coming deliverance, throws an intensely luminous glory over this subject. He scales the mount of suffering and of ignominy, walks around the cross, views it on this side and on that, and strikes his harp to the numbers of redemption. “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep had gone astray, we had turned every one to his own way; and the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.” “For the transgression of my people was He stricken.” “He shall bear their iniquities.” “He bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, He shall put Him to grief; when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands.” The Apostle Paul, already quoted, exclaims: “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. But God commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 6-8). And again, “He gave Himself for our sins.” “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” “He put away sin by the sacri-

fice of Himself." "He gave Himself a ransom for all." In our room, in our stead, in our place, for our sake. "Christ also suffered for us, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." And when the great drama is complete, and earth garners its sheaves in everlasting storehouses, then in the sunburst of eternal day, in the plenitude of eternal joy, and amid the splendours of glory everlasting, the ransomed shall sing, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!"

These are but a few of those frank, lucid and unambiguous utterances of revelation, flowing, as it were, spontaneously from the pens of the inspired, touching this cardinal topic; but which, in themselves, prove that to deny the validity of the Atonement, were to unwrite the words of God, and to send humanity compassless, helmless, hopeless on the turbulent sea of doubt and despair. This doctrine is essentially distinctive of Christianity, and by it the hopes of the world are bastioned as by pyramids of everlasting strength. Subvert the doctrine of Atonement and you unchurch the Church of God, you unchristianize the Christian religion, you unsaint the realms of light, you robe heaven in the blackness of darkness, and man, forsaken and abandoned, is lost forever. Man without an adequate atonement—no matter what his temporal resources, no matter what his ecclesiastical

discipline, no matter what the ardor of his zeal, no matter what the stretch of his activity—man without an adequate atonement is without God and without hope in the world. While, however, the Scriptures thus unequivocally proclaim an atonement for sin, they also set forth—

II. *The distinctive characteristics of an adequate Atonement.*

1. The Scriptures teach us that the Atonement has its basis in moral justice, and that it enables the Eternal Lawgiver to maintain inviolate the authority of law, and without conniving at sin, to pardon the sinner. The word *atonement* may have a *secular* use; as when offence and injury are repaired by certain amends, or are overlooked upon particular considerations. We have but to dismember it, and it presents the idea of unity, or being *at one*, to the very eye. Moses interposed to bring his brethren to peace; our version has it, "he would have set them at one again" (Acts vii. 26). But as a *sacred* term it implies the satisfaction made to justice, and substituted for the offender, in the form of a sacrifice. When we speak of the death of Christ with reference to divine justice, it is a *satisfaction*; with reference to *our* relation, as transgressors, of divine law, to the Lawgiver, it is an *atonement*; and when we speak of that event in its consequences towards ourselves, it is an *expiation*. Justice is the safeguard of holiness, and is the steady, unbending

obligation to punish whatever contravenes it. It is not directed against the criminal but the crime, and only through the crime against the criminal. Then, we ask, can sin be abstracted from the sinner? *Sin* cannot be, except by the inworking of holy influence and principle; *guilt*, however, may. Personal demerits cannot be transferred, but liability to suffering can. This is allowed in the institutions of universal society. We believe the death of Christ is such a transaction; that it is a sacrificial endurance in His person of our moral liabilities; that it is an infliction on Him of what we had incurred; that it is the only honorable consideration on which divine justice can remit the culprit's sentence, and receive the culprit's contrition; that it is a redress and means of reconciliation; that it leaves our Maker with as strict consistency to pardon as He had ever known of necessity to punish; that it is, in fact, a contrivance to convince man of his deepest guilt by bestowing upon him his fullest salvation, and to impress the universe with the sublime sentiment, that infinite purity *hates sin* as much as infinite mercy loves the sinner. Henceforth the Ruler of heaven and earth can "declare His righteousness for the remission of sin," can "be just and acquit him who believeth in Jesus." Again, the Scriptures teach—

2. That in the character of the victim perfect purity is essential. Under the Mosaic dispensation, the priest, in his official ministration, had first to offer sacrifice for his own sin, and though serving at the altar year after

year, offering the same sacrifices, neither he, nor the comers thereunto, were made perfect. The man, himself insolvent, cannot liquidate the debts of another; the criminal, himself under the ban and curse of a violated law, cannot expiate the crime of a brother rebel; so he that would present an atonement for a guilty world, must himself be without sin. Christ was perfectly pure—pure in heart, pure in life, pure in every relation and in every aspect. He had no sin, He knew not sin, and being without sin, absolutely “without spot or blemish,” He was perfectly fitted to make an atonement for the sins of others. Who but He could challenge the intelligent universe and confidently query, “Which of you convinceth Me of sin?” The argus eye of the most malignant vigilance searched His life and word in vain for a failure or a defect. Treachery, as its thirty pieces of silver scorched its guilty palm, said, “I have betrayed innocent blood.” Vacillation, as it washed its unmanly and craven hand, said, “I find no fault in the man.” Discipleship, even in its heartless abandonment, said, “Guile was not found in His mouth.” And if testimony may be wrung even from crime itself, then the malefactor on the cross said, “This man hath done nothing amiss.” He could say what all beside must leave unsaid, “The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me.” His character was ultimately immaculate; and in the whole history of His life we behold an innocence and a purity unchallengeable. In every word He uttered,

in every work He wrought, in every throb of His large, tender and benevolent heart, from first to last, He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners"—and being sinless, He "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

3. Another characteristic of an adequate atonement is, that it must be an expression of the will of the offended party. Truly we greatly misapprehend the whole subject if we view the atonement of Christ as *purchasing* the favor of God. There could have been no atonement but for the antecedent existence of divine favor, and that, too, in all the strength and intensity of divine yearning. We hold that the Father gave the Son, not that He might *become* merciful, but because He *was* merciful; not that His love might be *awakened*, but that *being* awakened, it might go out in all its munificence of blessing, and that in accord with eternal equity. To view the atonement of Christ as simply *appeasing* the Father's *wrath*, and *making* Him *merciful*; to view the Father as being *moved* to *compassion* for the guilty, by the *effusion* of His Son's *blood*, is wantonly to dishonor and degrade. Clearly let it be understood that Jesus reveals the *heart* of God, manifests the ardor and fervency of its longings, and that the intensity of His suffering, and the utterness of His desolation, and the stress and strain of His agony, are only exponent of a love, which, at any cost, must "commend" itself. Compatibly with the high and inexorable demands of Law and justice,

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there is but one way by which the rebel can be ransomed, but one channel through which grace can abound, and that is an adequate atonement. That this might not be wanting the Father surrendered—"spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all." We cannot say, touching the Atonement, that it was incumbent in the lowest, much less in the highest sense, on God to save. He might have left—it would have been justice to have abandoned. His law is a perfect system, and we might have perished before it, but He will uphold that law. He will do so in connection with mercy; hence, when no other help is found, when no other name is given, He gives His "only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

4. Another characteristic of an adequate atonement is, that it weakens not the law.

It is quite possible for an individual to substitute himself for another, and in the very act of so doing to destroy the very law under which he suffers. He may urge against its rigor, and declaim against its severity, and in his entire deportment leave it unapproved, unvindicated and dishonored. How widely different with the Atoning Lamb of Calvary. Through the whole course of His tried and eventful career—from Bethlehem to Golgotha, from the manger to the cross—though His footprints were dyed with blood, He revolted not, nor repined, nor murmured, nor voiced a single whisper against the integrity of God,

or the authority of law. Where, through the whole range of sacrificial history will you find a victim so patient, so unresisting, so heroic in endurance, so sublime in submission. In His language, in His walk, in His intercourse; in the stern and rugged travel of the wilderness, amid the mad attacks of men made fiendish; in the unutterable loneliness of Olivet, the opprobrium of the judgment hall, and the deep-darting, all-searching agony of the final hour—through every scene, in every experience, from the beginning to the end, He magnified the law, and He honored God. An atonement is *ruinous* when it weakens the law by subverting its claims or diminishing its obligations; it is *adequate*, if, while it yields to the law, it upholds, it sanctions; but it is transcendently *glorious*, if, while it honors the law, it invests it with new and additional authority. Now the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ pours such a flood of light on the divine law, enforces it with such an array of fresh and potential enforcement, and gilds it with such a lambent glory, that its claims are rendered doubly imposing and imperative. Thus Christ, in dying, actually champions the law—urges its every claim, approves its every sanction, reiterates its every utterance, and vindicates and establishes its universal and everlasting authority. “He magnified the law, and made it honorable.”

5. Another characteristic of an adequate Atonement is that blood is essential.

"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). It is not for us to speculate on the reasons for this, nor too curiously to ask the question why, in the infinitude of the divine resources, this element should be seized and held as absolutely indispensable to a perfect atonement. Suffice it to say that, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts higher than our thoughts, and His ways than our ways." The Scriptures, through all their types, shadows, ceremonials and magnificent symbolism, through all their sonorous prophecies, songs, precepts, and promises, announce substitution and the shedding of blood. Though the Son of God laid aside His glory, veiled His Godhead, and was found in fashion as a man; though He wept, and languished, and "offered supplication with strong cries and tears;" though in everything He pleased the Father, and though again and again the heavens opened, and the approving accents were heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," yet by none of those tears, or prayers, or sufferings, was the Atonement effected. Though the interblending of the divine with the human in the person of our glorious Redeemer gave essential force and infinite worth to all He said, and to all He did, still our salvation and eternal life are ever ascribed to the shedding of His blood. His bleeding side moves all the harps of heaven, and is for evermore the theme of its

loftiest song. Have we "obtained eternal redemption" that "is in His *blood*?" Are our sins pardoned? "We have redemption in His *blood*, the forgiveness of sins." Are we invited to a fellowship with God, as a means to an end. "The *blood* of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." Are we encouraged to "come to the throne of grace," and to have "access with boldness into the Holy of Holies?" It is "by the *blood* of Jesus." Do we "overcome the world," and are we "more than conquerors?" We "overcome through the *blood* of the Lamb." Are the redeemed in heaven seen in their purer than vestal array? "They have washed their robes and made them white in the *blood* of the Lamb." Are they heard lifting their most rapturous song? It is "Unto Him that washed us from our sins in His *blood*, be glory for ever and ever."





THE SOUL'S CONFLICT.

"If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, *they wearied thee*, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"—JER. xii. 5.



F all the rivers on the face of the earth, whatever the aspect of their surroundings, howsoever rich in historic or poetic associations, dearest to the thoughts of men is the far-famed Jordan. It is not, however, thus loved for any special beauty of its own, for it has little comeliness for men to admire or delight in. As a river it is of small commercial account, never knew navigation, and has borne upon its waters no "gallant ship." It runs through a dreary scene into the Dead Sea; and but for its more than magical connections in olden story, it would be unsought and unsung. But, for wealth of association and suggestion, what river can, for a moment, compare with the Jordan? Feet have stood

in its waters which have made it sacred forever ; and one baptism, at least, has thrown over its bosom a glory which must continue while the "sun and moon endure." More than four thousand years have passed since Jacob forded its waters with his staff, while the river ran low. Telling his story afterwards, he says, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan ; and now I am become two bands." Thinking of what he had with him twenty years before, and thinking of what he is now, and what he was then, he says, "With this staff I forded this Jordan ; and now I am become two bands," that is, "all these flocks, these herds, these people, these servants, this wealth, are mine ; and twenty years ago, all I had in the world was this walking-stick, and with it I passed over this Jordan." We have often felt a thrill as we have read the story, so simple and yet so full, of Israel's passing over this same Jordan. By the Jordan David sojourned, and there touched his harp to some of his richest psalmody. By its waters he had gathered some of his choicest treasures of memory. "Therefore," says he, "I will remember Thee from the land of Jordan." By the Jordan dwelt Elijah—stern, lofty, isolated, terrible in the majesty of his selfhood—and at the touch of his mantle it divided its waters to give him way ; and he left its thither margin in his chariot of fire. In short, to recount and restate the history of the Jordan, is but to recapitulate the sweet old Scripture story once more. Jordan has been embodied in modern song as

symbolizing the passage to the better life. We stand upon its hither shore and sing,

“ On Jordan’s rugged banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye
To Canaan’s fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie.”

“Passing over Jordan,” is another and equivalent phrase for “passing through death,” and the figure is perfectly just and expressive. Jordan was the separating line between the outer world and the Canaan which was, to the Israelite, the realization of hope, the fruition of faith, and the consummation so long and so devoutly desired. It should be no matter of surprise that Christian souls have called death the Jordan, and spoken of their future possessions as the “Heavenly Canaan.” The old river is, in the text we have selected, pressed into a somewhat peculiar service. Jeremiah, you will bear in mind, was a peculiar prophet—deep-hearted, and therefore sad; a poet, and therefore pathetic; a righteous man, and therefore stern and inexorable. The thorough defection of his people troubled him to the soul. He saw sin in the palace, sin in the hovel, sin everywhere, while the priests of the Lord seemed to have lost their faith. God’s presence had become, like some far comet, erratic, not to be counted on; showing itself only in flashes of intermittent glory. Thus, crushed in heart, and lorn, and disappointed, he began to feel the very agony

of that despair which is known only to the true and brave, and which the very bravest must endure at times. He feels himself to be utterly powerless to redress, and while his eye fills with pity, his arm is too short to save. What can he do? He cries out to God, he makes his appeal to heaven, he asks, "Why?" And is not a man justified in thus asking God to account, from His dwelling-place, for that which is unaccountable on earth, and to know that the earth is not utterly forsaken by its Maker?

In the magnificent outburst of poetic energy and fire with which our chapter opens, we see the stormy and passionate prophet face to face with God. He is not petulant nor repining, but he is almost fiercely in earnest, toned as though a fire ran along all the lines of his thought and feeling. He has fairly met the old, old problem—the mystery which gives to the Book of Job its matchless philosophy; to the harp of David its finest strings; to the life of every man its sturdiest work—the problem of prosperous guilt. Job asks, "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them." David says, "Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walked through the earth. When I thought to know this it was too painful for me, until

I went into the sanctuary of God ; then understood I their end." And here, in the opening of this chapter, Jeremiah says, " Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee : yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments : wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper ? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously ? Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root : they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit : Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins." This is very bitter, but it is the bitterness of deep and solemn feeling. The Psalmist, when he entered the " sanctuary of God," in the tumultuousness of his storm-tossed soul, he waited and became pacified, just as you have seen the ocean after a tempest, consoled and tranquillized under the calm and tranquil heavens. It was far otherwise with Jeremiah ; he entered the sanctuary and found things worse there than without—worse, because they should have been so much better. It is something tremendously awful when a poor, world-crushed, sorrow-crushed, sin-crushed soul seeks out the sanctuary as a refuge and home, to find it only another scene (and a worse) of turmoil, and distrust, and detraction, and all the deceits and treacheries of which the honest world would be ashamed. Oh, I say, this is the worst calamity a poor soul can know on earth. It was thus with Jeremiah ; he cries out, " I am alone, they have profaned Thy temple ;" " I am black, astonishment hath taken hold upon me ! Is there no balm in Gilead ? is

there no physician? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Under these circumstances what can the prophet do? He looks within, examines his own heart, and then carries his appeal from man to God. Listen to his words, in the third verse: "But Thou, O Lord, *knowest* me: Thou hast *seen* me, and *tried mine heart* toward Thee." The man who can thus challenge the Divine eye, who can thus appeal to the All-Searching, has immense revenues, which, after all, he would not barter for all the pomp and circumstance of worldly fortune. Jeremiah made this appeal, and this quiets him; and for his further enlightenment the questions of our text are propounded. "If thou hast run with footmen," etc. Now, the Jordan, which, as some one has observed, "is a scanty stream, which would almost gasp itself to death in the summer sun," is given to great and sudden risings. It has on each side two banks, an inner and an outer bank; and between these lie great stretches of desolate land, which, in the rainy season, the river overflows; and when between these two greater bounds the larger stream comes down, the lion is driven from his lair, and the whole space is laid under a waste of waters. "And now," says the Father, "if thou art so sad, what wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" I have always seen and felt the divine beauty of the words of my text; and although I have never based a discourse on them before, I remember that even in early childhood, when I heard

them read out, perhaps for the first time, how a sense of their loveliness broke in upon me, and how their cadences tingled and sank into the memory forever.

There are phrases whose truth glorifies their beauty ; phrases in which we find such gathered fragrance from the fields of God as leaves us with a sense of the divinest beauty. And of these sayings of rarest charm of which the Scriptures are full, there are few more quickening and beautiful than this in our text. Ordinary life, common every-day life, is the "running with footmen," is "the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst." It tries our temper, our patience, our principles. "They shall run and not be weary," can be said of very few. The time of peace tries us as much as a time of war. All goes well ; we contend against no one ; we run with the footmen, and all seems well and prosperous. Nevertheless, "man is born to trouble." You are born into the midst of cares and vexations. You cannot shun, you must meet and bear your share. Whether the burden shall be cast on the Lord, or shall crush us, depends on ourselves ; but it does not depend on *us* whether we shall have our burden. The Psalmist says, "Cast *thy* burden," taking it for granted that every man *has his* burden.

There is a benevolent preparation for greater and more distressing conflicts in our becoming accustomed to those which are common. We are not called *at first* to "contend with horses" (or horsemen), nor to enter at once "the swelling of Jordan." "He leadeth me

beside the still waters." Christ prepared His disciples for the terrible future by accustoming them to continue with Him in His temptations. The shaft hurled at them was broken on Him. Galilee was a miniature of the world. In Christ's own case He "ran with the footmen" when He was simply "enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself;" He was "contending with horses" when "all His disciples forsook Him and fled;" He was fairly in "the swelling of Jordan," when he cried, "Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani!" or, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The real meaning, then, of my text is: If thou art so readily overcome, so easily cast down by the little doubts and vexations of life, how wilt thou do when the banks are threatened, and the stream runs fast? If it is too much for thee to ford the Jordan when the stream is low, how wilt thou do when the river swells, when the waters seethe, and boil, and rush—when "deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the water-spouts?" It is wise and well, sometimes, to sit down and to think of the worst possible, and to ask the throbbing heart, "Oh, my heart, how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" It is surely the wisdom of the wise to sometimes ask how he will bear himself when the rivers of life grow wild and wide; when they come down and carry away all the sweet idolatries of home and heart; or, when worse than worst of these, the friend grows false, and we are left, chin deep in care and trouble,

to ford the great stream alone. Or again, when an aged father loses his children, and is left solitary in the winter of his years, "like a cold, lone house upon a northern moor?" This is sad, very. One of the very hardest things in life to a father's heart is to see his children depart; himself to linger, the ancestor of a dead posterity—his posterity having become his ancestors in the chronicles of death. Oh, this is cruel, hard. You have seen a lonely mother, whose occupation had gone, whose joys were all dead; and you have seen a father with the staff of the shepherd in his trembling hand, all his flock asleep, never to wake again. All this is very hard. If these sorrows come to thee, how wilt thou meet them? "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" To outlive joy—the home joy, the social joy—to stand disillusionized as to the world's spirit and promise; to see all things earthly disappoint, and then disappear; to have to write over, and under, and upon all that once enchanted, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." To see the charm pass out of pleasure, to see love spent and wasted, and the faithless flee away. This, *this truly*, is a time when a man may find a tragic wonder in the homely phrase, "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" There is, I say, a tragic wonder in the words, when, in the face of a great trouble, they come right out of a strong man's heart. We have known men—and even in Bible story have read of such—who were very feeble and faint while "running

with footmen," who, nevertheless, "contended" bravely "with horses," and who were very giants of heroism in "the swelling of Jordan."

However profoundly read in the mystic lore of suffering and of sorrow a man may be, he can never forecast in what fashion such may come to himself. Each man, with his eyes open, "must see for himself, and not for another," at a "set time," in an "appointed" way, the rise and the swell of Jordan. There will be a great swelling of Jordan at the last for every one of us, and however wide and deep the stream, its waters must be passed. There is no escape from that one crossing over. And, furthermore, about this final passage of the Jordan, there is this, it must be solitary. A lonely crossing of a lonely stream. From this hither side we may expect none to help, none to comfort us. However loved in other days, however fond and loving, however true, and watchful, and tender, down even to the very margin, there, at least, and at last, the plunge must be made alone, and those who go lovingly and tremblingly with us down to the banks must leave us there. Then, "how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" But while all is lone and dark on the earthward shore, and "the world recedes and disappears"—to the *Christian*, at least, *all is not dark*. "At eventide," and when "Good night" has been whispered to the last loving lingerer, the river shall glow in the new strange light of the further shore, and the shining ones shall be seen. It is more

than beautiful poetry ; it is living, blessed, rapturous truth, that we sometimes sing—

“ Over the river, they beckon to me,
Loved ones who've crossed to the other side ;
The gleam of their snowy robes I see
Though their words are lost in the swelling tide.”

I will suppose it to be one of my hearers this morning. Well, you have known sorrow, you have known bereavement, you have laid your heart's treasures away. They sleep, She, the once fond, joyous mother of your children, and they, your children, all are sleeping now—or, perhaps, most of such—and you are to the margin come, and you too, must launch away. And now, as touching the earth, all is over ; the waters heave around you, you are alone, deep in the swelling of Jordan, yet, *not forgotten* ; you pass on and voices are heard--the voice of the Spirit and the Bride says, “ Come ! ”—the voices of angelic choristers lift their welcome, Christ utters His commendation ; and then it may be that an old familiar voice is heard, and your eyes behold the countenance which once gladdened all the earth for you, radiant in heaven's light. And while all the scene rings with “ Welcome to the Lord's ransomed,” that dear and sainted wife, as she points to the starry seat above, where are your children near the King, she shall once more, as in other days, and as life and immortality are brought to light, warble out, “ Come home ! come *home* ! to thy children and me.”

THE SOUL'S CONFLICT.

Thus "the ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Sion,"—the saint reaches *home*, the weary is at rest. No rude alarms any more; no midnight shade any more; no lingering, shivering on the brink any more. The Jordan is passed, all tears are wiped away. "They see *His* face," and heaven is *heaven* forever. Amen!



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THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.

"The simplicity that is in Christ."—2 COR. xi. 3.



OW full-orbed and beautiful is the character of the Christ as presented to us in the Gospel! To His immediate followers He was the embodiment of "whatsoever things were true, whatsoever things were honest, whatsoever things were just, whatsoever things were pure, whatsoever things were lovely, whatsoever things were of good report." Nay, everything of excellence and worth was refined, and sublimated, and emphasized by His touch, and in Him. Those who had seen and known Him, saw all things beautified and crystallized in His divine light and loveliness. Their highest ideal of *truth*, was "the truth as the truth is in Jesus." His *peace* was a "peace that passeth understanding." They knew of no *grace* so tender and so full of benediction as "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." The *patience* that

did its "perfect work," was "the patience of Jesus." The faith, of keenest vision and strongest wing, was "the faith that worketh by love." And to the *love* of God—*divine love*—as shown by Christ, awakening all the echoes of the human heart, the fittest response was given, viz.: "We love Him because He first loved us."

In our text St. Paul introduces us to a somewhat unrecognized phase of Christ's life and doctrine, as such relates to us. Let us see, then, what herein lies, and what the "*simplicity*" that is in Christ, may imply. It is sometimes important that we weigh our words, and even when we have exercised the greatest care, we are not unfrequently annoyed at finding that we have to re-define our definitions. Before we make any large explanation of these words, it is needful to know what the word "simple" or "simplicity" means; for unless we do, we may be misguided. The word "simple" has been a sufferer; like most things in life, it has been subjected to wear and tear, and the law of change. As families go up and down in life, so do words. As families, who have started nobly in life, have often sunk into a sad ignobleness, so of words. A golden word like a golden coin, loses weight by over-use. So the laws of wear and tear need to be thought of and understood. Hardest gold is, in the end, wasted by softest touch; and the sweetest word, except it be nobly used, sinks down to the level of the user. I have found a real fascination in studying the rise and fall of words. Words which had once a peculiar

charm, and were used as lovely incense, come at last to be words of contempt. Did one doubt the depravity of human nature, it would seem quite enough simply to scan a dictionary to learn it thoroughly. Not more surely did Peter's speech bewray him as to whence he came, than do words tell whence they are derived. Now, this word "simple," before it became *complex*, was a lovely word. It meant *not* complex, not difficult, easy to be understood, plain to be stated. A "simple" man was a man of simple tastes, of few wants, easily satisfied. When the word is *so* used, it is a word of *commendation*, a word of *praise*. Thus in its primal signification the word "*simple*" is always a good one. When we speak of a "*simple-souled*," a "*simple-mannered*" man, we mean a man of inexpensive, quiet, simple tastes, and the word thus used is always a word of approbation and praise. But by a perversity inherent in human nature, this word, "simple," was made to do service for those other words, *foolish, shallow, stupid*. *Such is now its second meaning*. So when you speak of a man as a "simple-soul," how am I to tell whether you are praising him or not? When you say "poor simple soul," you have said enough to indicate its ignoble sense. But when you are speaking of a "simple-souled man," you are speaking of a man of pure purpose, and the word "simple" is lifted into the higher realm of its import, plainly commending a man as quietly calm, content within boundaries, placid under

difficulties. Thus it is that many words have come to derive the edge and point of their meaning, at least to a large degree, from the tone and look of the speaker. So there are two senses in which one might pray God to preserve the "simple." In the sense of commendation, would to God we all were more simple than we are; for to be simple in the godly meaning puts a man under the shadow of the Almighty, and when God is silent the man holds his peace.

In speaking of "the simplicity that is in Christ," we are speaking of a pure singleness of spirit, a calm repose amid the turbulences of the outer world, a serene quietude under fretful and chafing conditions; in short, of being at peace with God when the soul is perplexed and plagued, all the day long, with doubt. For the soul's doubts, and for the mind's darkness, the only, but all-sufficient antidote, is "the simplicity that is in Christ." Now, to be simple, is this—to find that you know very little, to find that you know next to nothing about life, to find that you don't know in the least what is the origin of evil, that you don't know anything about the soul of the world, the nature of heaven, the depth of hell, the mystery of eternity, and so forth; and yet to be contented, to go on with your allotted task, to do your duty, eating, sleeping, in perfect faith and trust—that is "the simplicity that is in Christ."

Now let us look at two or three of the evils, as we may call them, which sometimes fret and torment

those who have not "the simplicity that is in Christ"—some of the conditions under which God has chosen that this life of ours shall be lived. There is, for instance, the origin of evil that is very perplexing. That it should have had an origin at all, that it should have been permitted, that it should be perpetuated—all this is full of mystery; most of us have speculated about it, have reasoned high, and searched and searched with nothing but our labor for our pains. Those who have given the question hours, and those who have given it years of thought, have come equally empty away; neither knows more about it than the other. It may be well, occasionally, to talk about it, especially when you are young, but age learns what *not to know*, and what *not to try to know*. I thank God that He has preserved me in that matter. He has not darkened my eyes, but He has made me simple, not to know, nor wish to know, nor try to know these things, nor try to regulate my conduct by knowing them. He has given me room enough to be wise, room enough to be godly, and, alas! room enough to be foolish, room enough to miss the tree of life; so that to be safe, and at my best, I seek "the simplicity that is in Christ," and leave the "secret things" to younger men. There are many things we want to understand, and cannot. There are "*free will*," fixed-fate, fore-knowledge absolute," but we learn to leave them as we found them, by learning "the simplicity that is in Christ." Luther, Erasmus, Calvin, and many far wiser than we

desired to look into these things; they labored hard, and desired long, but they died without the sight. When we forget that "secret things belong unto the Lord," and that by "searching" we may never "find out the Almighty to perfection;" when we vainly strive to comprehend the incomprehensible, and to solve the mysteries which curtain the eternal throne, we are only departing further from "the simplicity that is in Christ," and giving place to doubts which *should have no place at all.*

We cannot make out anything in life very clearly. We look around and see that nature is fierce, and man cruel, and the world full of rapine and plunder, and the strong prey upon the weak, and the weak go under. What can we do? We go and join the simple-hearted, give up the endeavor to understand the philosophy of life, and retreat to Him who has said, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And this is "the simplicity that is in Christ." Knowing that He gives no rest to the restless, I lay down my understanding; I surrender my pride of intellect; I give up my arrogances of thought and self-righteousness, and sitting lowly at His feet, as did Mary, I "rest" in the sweet "simplicity that is in Christ."

Then there is another great burden of humanity—the burden of the great mystery of death. The philosophy of death! Who of us understands it? Who, by searching, knows more than the ancients here?

The lisping infant, the playful child, the blooming maiden, the vigorous youth, and manhood in its pride of prime—death claims all. And he is so arbitrary—the fairest first, the seemingly most needed soonest cut down.

“The good die first,
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket.”

A man gains but little by a rebel will in the presence of the great mystery. “If a man die, shall he live again?” “Wilt thou show wonders to the dead?” etc. Death and the grave, how full of silent, solemn wonder! Job speaks on this mystery thus: “A land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.” And so we come face to face with words we cannot spell, characters we cannot read, hieroglyphics before which we bow our head, and say, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” So I, for one, leave the philosophers and go down to Bethany, and sit me down at the feet of Jesus, and listen to Him as He tells me about the quiet heart, and the meek spirit, and speaks of trust, and faith, and a childlike disposition. I speculate no more upon death, and the dread unknown. I give all up, and in “the simplicity that is in Christ” I ask Him to speak one sentence, to speak it to my heart, and He does it. “Father, I will that they also, whom

Thou hast given Me, be with Me, where I am.' What is it to me where that is? In Him is pureness and peace.

“Lead kindly light,
I do not ask to see

The *distant* scene, *one step* enough for me;”

is all a wise man's cry. *Where* heaven is I do not know; but to be *where He is*,—ah! that is sound knowledge for the simple, an immense legacy of assurance for the lowly. “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where *I am*, there ye may be also.” Surely that is enough about heaven to send inspirations all through us; and it is just the benign and tender “simplicity that is in Christ.”

And then again, sometimes, one is troubled by that great want of certainty that hangs over almost everything. How little we really know! There are but very few things in this world that even a wise man can be certain about. There are a few laws about mathematics, and so on, that are exceedingly well established, but these are such poor things to be certain about. If I ask, says a late writer, “Where is the next world, and what is it like? Will evil ever go out of this world, and if so, when? Will Christ come upon earth a second time, and if so, under what conditions?” These are questions confessedly above us, we cannot answer. Man wants to know every-

thing, and cannot ; he would like to know to-morrow's history before it comes, but he cannot ; the prophet can tell you many things, but he cannot tell you what will make up your experience during the next hour. However magnificent my powers as a man, I am, after all, but a limited, restrained and confined being. I want to know all about God, but the quiet hand of Jesus touches me, as softly as the touch of a little child, and I hear His voice saying unto me, "Hush ! peace be still ! He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also." So when all these things press upon me—the divine desires, the noble powers, the infinite hopes of man, yet with vision so dim that he cannot pierce beyond the grave—I give myself over to the blissful "simplicity that is in Christ." And when even the supremest sorrow is upon us, and the heart and harp have lost a string, if we have this "simplicity," we may sing Job's old song, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away : blessed be the name of the Lord." This is "the simplicity that is in Christ," and becomes the divine simplicity of man. *As such*, it constrains man to acknowledge his *limits*, to see his *bounds*, to know that there are things that *cannot* be known, to understand that there are some things that cannot be understood, and to become, before God, as a little child—acquiescent, loving, obedient. Those who are thus "simple" can sing songs in the night, and fall into the everlasting arms and *rest themselves*, not in what they *know*, but in what they

trust. And then, again, in those highest matters which belong essentially to our eternal peace, what a charm there is in "the simplicity that is in Jesus." Do what I may, I cannot silence an accusing conscience, nor wash away my sin; but the loving Father's "unencumbered" plan of pardon is clearly seen, and read in "the simplicity that is in Christ." No priestly touch is needed here, no toilsome pilgrimage, no painful penance, no costly offering; but a simple faith in Christ, a believing in Jesus, which shall work out into all the beautiful simplicities of Christian charity and well-doing. "God be merciful to me a sinner" is a very simple prayer; but when offered by the publican it became "the power of God unto salvation." Let us sit lowly at the feet of Jesus. Those two Marys, of whom record is made in the Gospel, elected the noblest wisdom—the one who was sinful chose the feet to anoint, and bathed and washed them with her tears; and the one who was simple and teachable chose the feet also. The sad and sinful soul wept over His feet, feeling herself not worthy to rise and anoint His head, and to her he gave immortality through the Gospel; and to the other, who sat at His feet, lowly, simple, asking only to listen to His words, what said He to her? Oh, blessed words of commendation! "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." *Let us seek* "the simplicity that is in Christ."



THE SOUL RECALLING ITS OLD SONGS.

"I call to remembrance my song in the night."—PSALM lxxvii. 6.



OF all the powers by which a wise and beneficent Creator has distinguished and magnified the human soul, there is none that plays a more important part in the economy of mental conditions than the power of memory. This retrospecting gift, strange as it may seem, can make heroes or cowards of us all. It is a prerogative of every normal and healthy mind, and becomes a bane or a benediction, according to the complexion stamped upon the moral history of the individual. The treasures of a memory fraught with benign and radiant images are more than wealth and blandishment; they are a joy and "a peace that passeth understanding," not evanescent and fleeting, but constant and veracious. We never know, indeed, what healing, what curative comfort, what reinvigoration and actual life-force, may dwell in a memory undefiled. How the lone, silent hours

may become the most delightful, yea, even rapturous, when memory is on the side of virtue, and her blissful smiles flood the soul! Who, among the virtuous, but knows how, by memory's aid, we may cheat the present of its sadness, and its sorrow, and its midnight! It can fringe the blackest cloud with rainbow hues, and set a star in the murkiest heavens. Joy and sorrow, hope and fear, happiness and misery, are each evoked or annihilated by the wand of a smiling or a frowning, a blessed or a blasted, memory. Memory is fairly the heart's own realm, and the heart has peopled it with its loves and hates, its "spirits of health and goblins damned," and with these it holds strange converse. Within the reproductive soil of memory the heart has scattered the seed-principles of its smiles and mirthfulness, or, alas! of its tears and grief; and the heart reaps as it sows.

The writer of the inimitable psalm from which our text is taken had evidently a memory variously stocked and stored. We know but little of him, for the psalm, you will observe, was not written by David, but by Asaph; and who he was and what he did, we can hardly tell. Of his outward life we know nothing; but of his woes, sorrows, sadnesses, fainting, failing, falling; his recovery, his rising, his rapture, and victory—all these we *do* know, for he has set them to strains which can never die. If you note closely, you will find that this especial psalm or song recounts the history of a soul working itself out—slowly,

indeed, but surely—from the very deepest gloom into sunlight, and therefore into victory. The fulness and frankness of the expression makes the whole of his experience of misery pass before us. Let us tarry a moment or two, that we may analyze a few sentences; for you will observe that his memory inspires, and informs, and inflames all his utterances. This sentence:

“I remembered God, and was troubled.” Where, in the whole range of your observation have you met with a sentence, the soul of which breathed a sorrow as sorrowful as that? In calling to mind a loving, tender, beneficent God, he was troubled. He had gone forth saying, “Oh, that I knew where I might find Him;” and finding Him, he is troubled. It is the trouble of Adam, who hid himself when God called for him in the garden. It is the trouble of a consciously guilty soul when a pure and holy soul comes into its presence. Thomas Hood has touched this point with a masterly power in his weird and desolate poem on “Eugene Aram.” He pictures the murder-stained teacher as sitting in evening school among his innocent little ones, and as uttering the words:

“Oh, heaven! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in evening hymn:
Like a spirit of the pit I seemed
’Mid holy cherubim!”

It is the trouble of one who has consciously, in a mean and selfish moment, thrown an agony into a heart that would have bled for him, that, at least, had never done him wrong. See Judas, who sold his Master. See Peter, who gave Him away. Judas could not bear either his own presence, or his own shadow, and plunged, an overwhelmed soul, into the infinite! Peter "goes out" and weeps his heart-break into a martyr's resolves, and he keeps them.

It is the trouble of one who has asked God to come and be his guest, but who, on God's coming, is not ready; who has to keep Him outside, who dare not admit Him just now, and is, therefore, full of shame and confusion of face, *i.e.*, "I remembered God, and was troubled." This "trouble" may have other springs; it may come of knowing and loving God, and yet, taking a partial and one-sided view of His acts. "Shall there be evil in a city and God hath not done it?" Perhaps the darkest night a soul can know, apart from the sorrow of its own sinfulness, is that of watching God's ways, and seeing how hard they sometimes seem to be; "and it is a heavy thing," as one has said, "to sing a song in such a night." "I call to remembrance my song in the night." "The night" is, of course, spoken of poetically; meaning the night of life. The night, spiritually speaking, is that time in a man's life when, from whatever cause it may be, all that is gladsome and light, plain and clear, obvious and a matter of praise, has gone out.

Such times this man knew, and we also know them. Times when nothing is good, but all appears evil, and we think of the Author of all things as beholding everything with the same cold, cruel, relentless, pitiless eye; then the soul sinks down, and says, "I remembered God and was troubled." Take a familiar case that has just happened. Note the facts of Pilot Boat No. 8, with its precious human freight, swamped, lost! Brave and honest hearts! That was night, indeed; and it is night to any man who reads of it at first. For, "Why so?" says the heart. "Why should this be permitted? Where is the All-Wise, the All-Powerful, the All-Loving?" And until a man can look such a calamity in the face, and weeping such tears as sympathetic sorrow must weep, through those *very tears*, can sing the same song he has sung in the daytime, he has not mastered the depths of trust, nor entered into the amazing comforts of faith. Can you do it? Can you say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord?" It is a very easy matter to say, "Death is a beneficent ordering;" but it is a different thing to acknowledge that when it comes. It is easy to sit down and write an essay on "The Death of a Child," but when the death comes, and to miss

"His light step on the stair,
To miss him at his evening prayer,
All day to miss him everywhere;"

how then? Ah! then it is night. The praises of

danger are sung by men who are safe; but the thing is to sing, as this man did, when the night is dark and the seas run high, "I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed." I cannot sleep. The night is come; but no sleep, no rest; and of all drearinesses to the body, that is one of the dreariest, to lie and sleep not; to close the eyes and find no refreshment; to count the long hours of a winter's night, and wonder when it will be morning; to have the experience of Job: "When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone?" and when the dawning of day comes, to say, "When will it be night? Thou holdest me awake, instead of being at peace with Thee."

"I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed." I cannot sleep in Thee, or trust in Thee, and at last he says (4th verse), "I am so troubled that I cannot speak." This is the *ultimatum*, the last sorrow unto which the soul can come. It cannot be quiet; it cannot sleep in God; it cannot trust in Him; it cannot *even speak*. Dumb, dark, hopeless, trustless; beholding God, but unable to kiss Him; acknowledging the Father, but unable to love Him; never, I say, did man set forth the deepest sorrow of the soul better than this man has done it. But he works out of his darkness and difficulty. Finding that he can get no sleep, no trust, that it is night, then he said he called to remembrance the daytime, and in the night he thought of the light.

And as he had no light, not even the feeblest ray of faith, all being dark, what did he do? He looked out of the bars of his darkened window, and thought of the old light of bygone times. For there are times when, though the soul cannot sing, nor the heart be glad, the old days may be thought of. A man may get up amid his own darkness, and look out upon the light of another man's window, and even take some comfort from that. So this is what this wise soul did. He goes to the window—he knows where that is—and looking out through the great darkness, he says, "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times." For, thank God, to-day's darkness blots not out yesterday's sunshine, and in the depths of winter it is sometimes pleasant to remember how the summer looked. "Darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day."

Now this is the remedy. He called to mind olden days, and so, by degrees, the light came. He speaks most pathetic words. "It is so *dark, dark, dark*, I cannot sing: I have nothing to say to Thee, O God, but I will call to remembrance the song I *did* sing once." And so the memory does what the heart could not do at the time; and even from this little beginning, if you read the psalm with care, you will see that the victory commences: "I call to remembrance my song in the night." And the tongue, *too dumb to sing*, perhaps, whispers to itself the old song. And here mark, among other things, the advantage of learning songs,

and singing them while the heart is young and glad ;
they get into the memory, and there they lie until
they are needed.

“Harp of Zion, pure and holy,
Pride of Judah's eastern land ;
May a child of guilt and folly;
Strike thee with a feeble hand !
May I to my bosom take thee,
Trembling from the prophet's touch,
And with throbbing heart awake thee,
To the strains I love so much ?

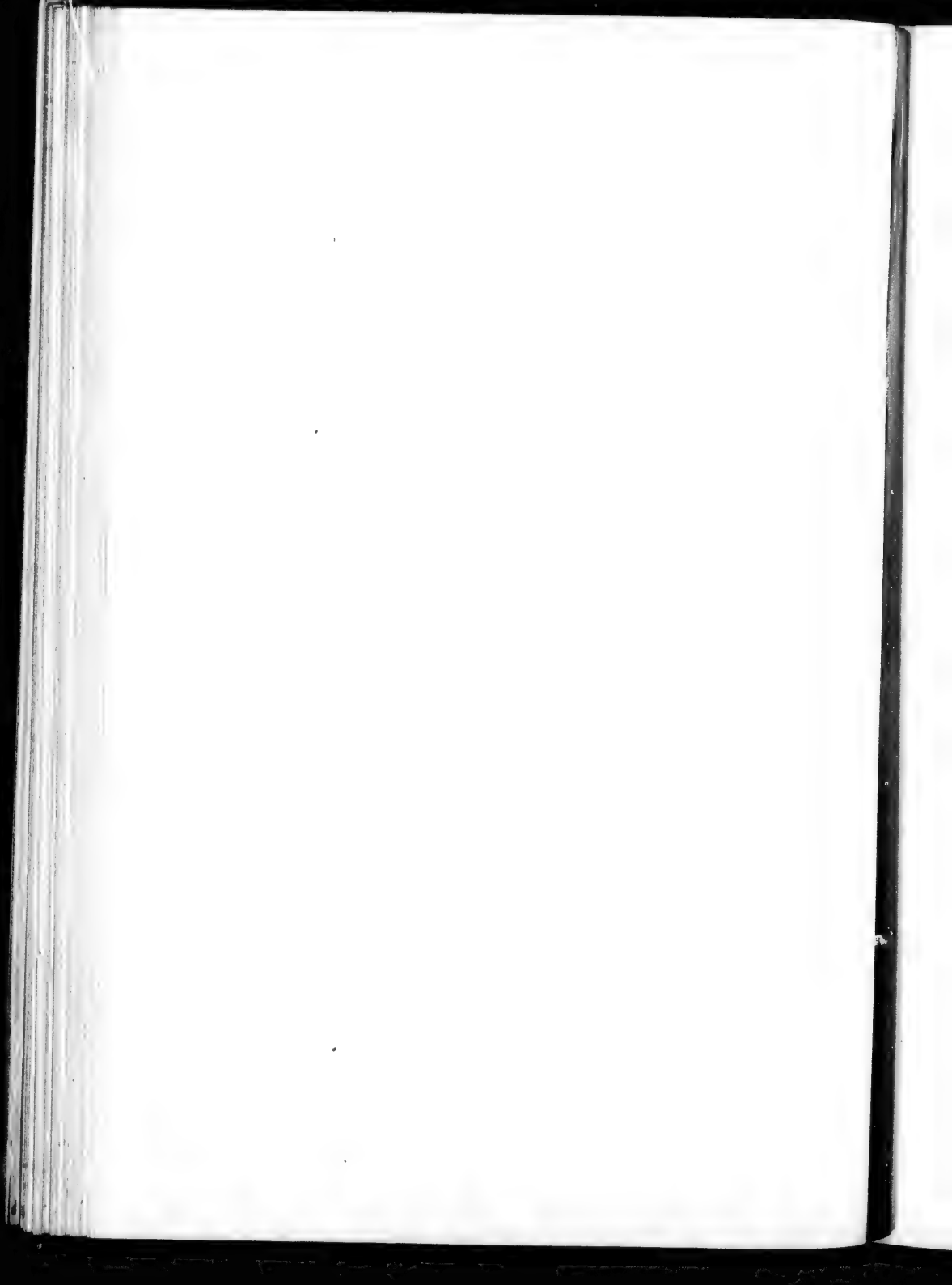
“I have loved thy thrilling numbers
Since the dawn of childhood's day,
Since a mother soothed my slumbers
With the cadence of thy lay ;
Since a little blooming sister
Clung with transport round my knee,
And my glowing spirit blest her
With a blessing caught from thee.

“Mother, sister, both are sleeping
Where no heaving hearts respire ;
Whilst the eve of age is creeping
Round the widowed spouse and sire :
He and his amid their sorrow
Find enjoyment in thy strain ;
Harp of Zion, let me borrow
Comfort from thy chords again.”

And so, falling back to the writer of this psalm, you
will perceive that, in remembering the old song, he
goes a little further, and he calls to mind the fact that

he had once *sung* it. What had been, might be again. No light now, but there *once was*, and there may be again. The fickleness of April tells of a possible May.

One evening when travelling near Oxford, in England, some years ago, my path lay through some meadows, and the soft dew was falling on the slumbering flowers. All was quiet, not a leaf seemed to stir. The inscrutable moon hushed the very air into silence by the silver magnetism of her beams. Not a sound fell—silence all, and I moving through it. All at once, a voice of unutterable melody, of piercing, ineffable richness, burst upon my astonished ear. Trill on trill, peal after peal of impassioned music filled grove and garden and field with deliciousness. All nature appeared to hang entranced by the little minstrel of the hour. That nightingale, whose tones were of such bewitching potency, was but a little russet bird, not discernible in the gloom, completely hidden among the leaves from which he rehearsed angelic song. One of the least of the birds of heaven, but in magical compass of voice and persuasive declamatory eloquence the loudest in his Maker's praise. So it is, that from the loneliest and most obscure lives, from the shadiest and most solitary hearts, there may ascend to God the very richest notes and even pæans of adoration. Oh, let us cease our lamentations, and let our doleful *misereres* give place to an *exultemus* heartfelt and constant.





A SAVIOUR, AND A GREAT ONE.

“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.—HEBREWS vii. 25.



POWER with God is original. He is the unoriginated originator of all power; the uncaused cause of every visible and invisible effect. He is God all-sufficient, and His power is infinite. Where the essence is limited the power is also limited; where the essence is infinite the power has no bound. Nothing but God is infinite; and without God, the words “infinity” and “eternity” have no meaning. Being infinite He is Omnipotent—the Lord Almighty. “Once have I heard this, yea, twice, that power belongeth unto God,” and “the thunder of His power, who can understand?” But our ideas of divine power are rather of the sense than of the spirit—we think of Him when in the fulness of His power, “He spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast,” when He addressed things that were not, as though they were, and made the barren womb of nothing teem with the wonders

of His hand. We think of Him as laying the foundation of the earth, and as making and amassing the gorgeous gems of the firmament, as "standing and measuring the earth, as beholding and driving asunder the nations, as scattering the everlasting mountains, and making the perpetual hills to bow." We are startled with the manifestations of His power, as they flash upon us in the glare of the lightning shaft, and roar in thunder that shakes the nations. We stand in awe of its presence in the rolling deep, "glassing itself in tempests" and discomfiting the proudest armament of the world. These are tokens of power which, while divine, are nevertheless sensuous; they appeal to the universal intuition, and are obvious to every mind. But it is not with that power, or at least with that phase of power, before which the lightnings are submissive, and say, "Here we are;" it is not with that power, or that phase of power, before which the tempest folds its wings and lulls itself to rest, it is not with that power, or that phase of power, by which the hosts of heaven are named, and at whose bidding they never fail to appear, with which we have to do in the treatment of our subject to-night. It is rather with the power of God as manifested in deeds of benevolence, in acts of deliverance, in works of salvation, "the saving strength of His right hand." And in this field of observation we are met by tokens, and conquests and monuments of power which entirely minify the most stupendous

achievements of the Eternal, whether in creation or in providence. If I would take in the largest, the most comprehensive idea of divine power, then creation is as nothing compared with compassion, and worlds on worlds, systems beyond systems, firmament encircling firmament—a fiat crowding the spreadings of immensity, all are as nothing to the aboundings of mercy. That angels and all spirits should acknowledge divine power; that God should make the clouds His chariot, and walk upon the wings of the wind; that the mountains should smoke at His touch, and the curtains of the land of Midian tremble at the breath of His nostrils; that the sea should recoil at His beck, and the waters of Jordan stand in heaps at His bidding; that He should ride upon the heavens in His excellency, and hold the powers of hell in chains as of adamant—all this is as nothing; but that He should be insulted, and not menace; defied, and not crush; outraged, challenged, blasphemed, and not take vengeance—oh, here is the brightest display, the grandest manifestation of His awful power and Godhead. Nor here alone; if we take into consideration the assumption of our nature by Jesus Christ. What power is there! What greater disparity than between God and His work? What greater difference can exist than that which exists between the Deity and humanity, between the Creator and the creature? and yet the difficulty of a union is overcome. Eternity and time, the infinite and the finite, the immortal and

the dying are united, associated and made one. Almightiness and weakness, omniscience and ignorance, immortality and the sport of vicissitude blend and harmonize. The independence of God, the dependence of man, the emptiness of man and the fulness of the Godhead bodily are made to mingle and coalesce. Oh, wonder of wonders! "without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh!" And oh! glance for a moment at the life of Christ amongst men, how He poured the light of day upon the sightless eyeball and ejected the demon from the distracted frame, how He made the lame to dance by a syllable and fed the hungering thousands by a word, how health blushed on the cheek of sickness and the skin of the leper came upon him as that of a little child at His touch, how sorrow fled its abode and the dull, cold ear of death opened at the sound of His voice. That Christ is "the power of God," let the thundergong of that sea whose billows consolidated beneath His feet declare—that He is the power of God; let the forsaken bier of Nain, and the rifled tomb of Bethany; let the darkened heavens, and the riven rock, and the rent veil, and the ransomed thief; let all the miracles of His life and the prodigies of His death; let the minstrels in Bethlehem and the executioners of Calvary; let angels and men; let time and eternity; let heaven, and earth, and hell; let all proclaim that He is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." Christ is emphatically "the power

of God unto salvation." He was anointed to preach good tidings, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of prison doors to them that were bound. "It pleased the Lord to bruise and to put Him to grief, when He made His soul an offering for sin." "He suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps." "He also suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." "And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him." "Wherefore," said the apostle, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Saving power, as vested in Christ, will constitute our theme on this occasion; and may God grant, that by the aid of the Holy Ghost, we may be enabled to discourse to your edification and profit, and to the honor and glory of His name. It will be our end and aim to demonstrate the power or ability of Christ. "He bore the sins of the whole world in His own body upon the tree." "He tasted death for every man," and, "having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them, openly triumphing over them in His death." "Wherefore He is able also to save." We leave the many and marvellous events of His life, the awful and unparalleled onset of the wilderness, the stern grandeur of His attitude amid the threatenings of hate and of mad ambition. We leave the holiest place of His agony in Olivet, and the unutterable solemnity of the

judgment hall, and with reverent heart and slackened pace follow Him to the theatre of His final passion, and the events which crowded the last crimson hour. Oh! what an hour was this! All that went before was but a prelude and a prologue to the tragedy. All that has transpired since is but illustrative of it, or subservient to it. When the rocks burst with alarm, and the globe shuddered with affright—when night strangely usurped the throne of noon, and the dead could keep silence no longer, and could sleep no more—then it was that, single-handed and alone, He encountered the last enemy, fought His last battle and laid Him down to rest. The conflict of Calvary had been the theme of prophecy from Eden downwards; it had hung upon the lip of the patriarch, trembled on the harp of the prophet, and had been hailed afar from the mountains of Israel. Time itself was young, when an insulted but benignant Deity gave the assurance—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." Through the roll of four thousand years that "enmity" had lost none of its rancor, none of its bitterness; nay, it had rather increased in its deadliness, its intensity, and when, at length, it could be restrained no more, it burst in a very deluge of hellish rage upon the solitary sufferer of Calvary. The conflict was without a model and without a shadow—unrivalled in the annals of the universe. On the one hand, we beheld the Son of Man girt with dishonor, covered with shame, and

lonely as midnight; on the other hand, arrayed against Him, a fell and diabolical conspiracy—a league of principalities and powers. The importance of the question at issue was at once tremendous and overwhelming. Heaven, earth and hell were more than concerned. The throne and monarchy of heaven had been assailed; its honor and stability seemed to hinge upon the issues of the struggle, and hence the enemy mustered every legion, rallied every force, concentrated every energy, and set every engine of destruction to work. Ten thousand times ten thousand crowd the arena of combat, squadron after squadron take its position before the Cross. It is the Redeemer's crisis of being, His extreme of suffering and desertion. They see Him deserted by man, forsaken by God, smitten by vengeance, convulsed with agony—and in one dread and final effort they charge on the lone sufferer. It is a moment of deepest suspense; the whole intelligent universe hangs on the scene amazed. But when every vial of divine wrath has been emptied, and earth and hell can do no more, he cries, "It is finished!" "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Me, for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury: their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garment, and I will stain all My raiment." "For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come." Thus He fell, and thus He triumphed—planting the throne of grace, and waving

the sceptre of mercy high over the broken dominion and waning glories of His foes. Can the poet afford to waken up his muse, and scale the heaven of his invention to furnish in measured cadence the tale of battle and slaughter, of blood and conquest? Does he dip his pen in blood and draw his lines in crimson to give effect to his recital? If blood and conquest be his chosen theme, let him come to Calvary. Here he may find a subject, catch a strain, breathe a note which shall enable him to vie with ten thousand spirits round the throne. Does the sculptor stretch his imagination, and tax his ingenuity to give immortality to earthly heroes? Does he delight to symmetrize the emblems by which valor and bravery are perpetuated? If a monument of glory is to be secured from scenes of conquest, let him come to Calvary. Here he may find materials for his grandest achievement, for here Jesus died. The conflict and the conquest of Calvary shall be had in everlasting remembrance. The great and the mighty have fallen in every age, and other mountains besides Gilboa have lamented their illustrious men slain in their high places. Other passes besides Thermopylæ have mourned their unreturning brave, but the laurels of heroes fade, and the monuments of statesmen crumble into dust. If, however, you wish to gaze on a monument whose glory fades not with the revolution of ages, whose attractions shall not wither—which shall outlive the wreck of matter, and survive the crash of worlds—if

you wish to behold a monument which is destined to stand unimpaired, while the triumphs of all the ransomed gather round it! Go to Calvary, for there Jesus died. Oh, acknowledge the wondrous majesty of the scene—there Jesus died—and dying, He paid our debts, vanquished our foes, satisfied justice and opened the kingdom of heaven to every believer. Hail, thou hero of Edom! Hail, all hail, thou conqueror of Bozrah! We gaze upon the token of Thy passion, and hold Thee “Mighty to save.”

To all ages the challenge of the redeemed is “who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died.” The name of Jesus, and the greatness of His salvation, have never ceased to operate, with an irresistible and ever developing energy, upon the hearts, upon the understandings, and upon the consciences of men, even from the period of their earliest promulgation. Eighteen hundred years have left their trace and impress upon whatever is contingent, and dying empires have arisen, have flourished, have decayed, and have dried up realms to deserts. Thrones have been subverted, sceptres broken, and diadems have seen their jewels scattered to the winds. The proudest achievements of human skill have sunk beneath the weight of years and left not a trace behind. The dark and remorseless tides of oblivion have heaved upon the footprints of the mightiest heroes; and many a deed of martial daring, and of civic greatness, is left without a story in the chronicles of time. So with man

himself; "the grass withereth, the flower fadeth;" "one generation passeth away, and another cometh;" "instead of the fathers have been the children;" and we who now are, shall be as though we had not been, and shall mingle our dust with that of the silent fathers of the past.

"One lingering look and all is o'er,
And time rolls on as it rolled before."

"But His name shall endure forever," "and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." "He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba, prayer also shall be made for Him continually, and daily shall He be praised." "One generation shall praise His works unto another;" fathers shall hand down His religion to their children; age shall transmit it to age; "day unto day shall utter" his "speech," "and night unto night shall show" his "knowledge." Many of the greatest, as well as the least in the kingdom of Jesus, first learnt His name from lips of "parents passed under the skies," and we are repeating it to our children. Some of them have begun to lisp their young hosannahs to that name, and if the rest will never take it up before, we are hopeful that they will catch it as it quivers on our dying lips, and thus prolong the joyful strain. Formularies, rituals, ceremonials may pass away; the mighty platforms of the visible church may totter and fall; independency may cease to be; Presbyterianism

may be superseded; Episcopacy may lose her influence; and Methodism may finally fall; but "His name shall endure forever." It shall endure in what He has wrought, and be rehearsed from the harps of His ransomed in heaven forever. It shall endure fragrant as the rose, spotless as the lily, healing as the plant of renown, and radiant as the morning star, for ever and ever. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." We shall, in the next place, endeavor to show the ability of Christ to save, as demonstrated in the establishment of Christian religion. This event most unequivocally illustrates the saving power of Christ. The condition of the world at the death of Christ was anything but such as would warrant anything sanguine as to the hopes of even partial success on the part of those, then, but newly found in God. The world's mind had been stimulated to its loftiest pitch of refinement and effort. The high and unsearchable providence of God which meteth out the gifts of the nations, had already awarded the palm of intellect to Greece. The matchless conquest of Alexander had aroused Asia to a recognition of Grecian might, and had effectually dispelled the gloom gathered by Persian opposition upon Ionia. The widespread success of the Grecian army had rendered Grecian literature familiar to the men of the Orient, and the self-centred Jew acknowledged its majesty as manifest in the Septuagint. Thus the latent vigor of intellect, east

and west, quickened by the spirit of Greek philosophy, awoke to a most tireless and powerful exercise. The schools of the Greek sophists were found in almost every part of the empire, and their dextrous eloquence had a wonderful effect in sharpening the national mind. The music, painting, sculpture and poetry of Greece had united in idealizing the fiercest passions and the grossest vices of our nature, till they became objects of worship; and her keen and well-trained intellect had expended all its subtle powers in changing wisdom into sophistry, and making a boast of its skill in perverting right and wrong, and making the worse appear the better reason. The centre of attraction around which the hopes and destinies of mankind revolved was the Athenian Acropolis, and Greece was at once the representative and instructress of the world. It was thus when Christianity was given, the especial religion of evidence, of argument, of learned research and of intellectual freedom. Yet, while the religion of the incomparable Nazarene was designed to expand the intellect, enlarge the mind, refine the sensibilities, and to save the soul—its outward seeming, its external array, rendered it at once a stumbling-block and a derision. Hence for three centuries it had to make its own way in the world, for three centuries it was lone as an exile, branded as an outcast, arraigned as a criminal—the object of scorn, a thing of hate, and the butt of vituperation and impious ribaldry. Its representa-

tives and advocates were, to a very great extent, without name, rank or influence. Philosophy, science and literature were banded against it. None of the world's princes did it homage, none of the world's potentates accorded it reverence. But as the delicate ivy, creeping where no life is seen, takes to its tiny self strength sufficient to break a tower in twain, and rends the rugged rocks asunder, so the seed principle of the world's higher life began to germinate. Nursed by inclement and warring elements, it took on strength, put forth root and branch, and waved defiance to the blast. Or, to change the figure, the little stone cut out of the mountain without hand is, at first, a most insignificant and unimposing object, but rolling down the declivity, it gathers bulk, momentum, velocity—every revolution swells its dimensions, and accelerates its speed, and increases its force, till finally it crashes upon the colossal compost, and grinds it to powder. So the religion of Jesus, without force, and against it; without wealth, and against it; without patronage, and against it; and against the disgrace, threats, imprisonments, exiles, and furious flames of martyrdom, rises into such magnitude and influence as make monarchs tremble in their capitals. In a most unequal contest, the unlettered fishermen of Galilee perplexed philosophy, confounded power, and struck eloquence dumb. The groves of the Delphian Oracle were deserted, the Minerva of the Acropolis was abandoned in her lofty

shrine, and the oratory that fulminated over Greece to Artaxerxes' throne, was overawed by a mightier persuasion. Kings and priests, and hosts and nations, cowered and quailed in the presence of men who were turning the world upside down. Charmers were charmed, and diviners acknowledged another and a higher divination. This new doctrine began to permeate all classes, to sway all ranks, to melt all hearts; it had never been known on this wise. Judges trembled before their prisoners, and kings were persuaded to be Christians. It succeeded equally with the civilized and the barbarous, the bond and the free; and prevailed over districts and realms inaccessible to the laws and legions of Rome. It won its way into the court, the senate, the forum, and the temple; and men, the most opposite in rank, in temper and in opinion, were alike subjugated by the power. At length, Constantine made the Christian doctrine "a part and parcel" of the Roman law; and the imperial eagles, which had fought with the world, and fought only to conquer, were now seen to bend before the greater and bloodless victories of the Cross. But how comes it to pass that a religion so inauspiciously inaugurated, so darkly frowned upon, so meagre in its advocates, with philosophy, rhetoric, art, malice and contempt so rudely fixed against it, gradually developed in such majesty as compelled submission and inspired reverence? Wherein was the talismanic wand, that sobered passion, controlled reason, excited sensibility, awed con-

science, aroused gratitude, and took captive the whole man? What latent energy famished the gods, cast down the temples, smote the images of power, and crumbled the altar and the god alike into dust? What secret influence, in connection with this religion, softened the rigors of despotism, tamed the insolence of conquest, mitigated ferocity, relaxed the pride of place, and brought the richest and the poorest, the highest and lowest into a benevolent and affectionate brotherhood? What was it that fired the logic of Paul, inflamed the zeal of Peter, pointed the eloquence of Apollos, and thundered in the thunderings of Boanerges? What was it that sustained the early Christians, and enabled them to welcome trials, persecution and even death, if thereby the truth they loved might accumulate its trophies, and go forth with a mightier attestation to the world? Do we not find a full and irrefragable answer to these questions in the sublime and divine averment, "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" Had this counsel or this work been of man it had come to naught; it was of God, and therefore not overthrown. "Go ye cut into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and lo, I am with you always even unto the end." The presence of the Great Head of the Church, and the manifold interpositions of His saving power alone account for the establishment and glory of Christianity in its earliest triumphs, as well as its continued preservation, and the

grandeur of its latest victories. But I proceed to notice more prominently the ability of Christ as manifested in the preservation of His Church. Through how many ages has His saving power been displayed in guarding, defending and sustaining those interests which especially belong to His spiritual reign amongst men. He has defended and saved, (1st) from foes without. No sooner were the doctrines of Christianity promulgated than the spirit of a most violent and rancorous hostility was evoked, and persecution found her readiest instruments, and wielded her deadliest weapons. Horrors and atrocities were perpetrated without a sigh. The followers of the Lamb were compelled to fly from city to city, from province to province; the Jew accusing them to the Romans, and the Romans delivering them to the Jew. They were tortured, crucified, sawn asunder, torn to pieces. Hatred made itself drunk with their blood, pride kindled and danced by the fires which consumed them, and bigotry chased and smote them with untiring and remorseless cruelty. But yet they endured. "Endured as seeing Him who is invisible." It was in fight that they waxed valiant; it was in death that they were "more than conquerors." Well did Tertullian exclaim, "Those scaffolds of infamy to which you bind them, the branches with which you burn them, are the instruments of their triumph, their car of victory." When smitten to the ground, they shouted for joy of the conquest, and when covered with shame and dis-

honor, they gloried in a crown of righteousness. Nothing could damp their ardor, nothing could abate the fervor of their devotion. And the history of the earlier Christians has been re-enacted in every subsequent age of the Church's trial and sorrow. We think of the unoffending Albigenses, of the vainly flying Vaudois, of the "slaughter of Saints," of the Cottian Alps, and the terrible siege of Bezyeres. We think of the strifes of the Pentland Hills, and the spirits of the mighty dead who rose from calcined bodies on Smithfield to refulgent thrones in heaven. These all, a noble army, are our ancestors in suffering and triumph, in shame and in renown, in dishonor and in glory. They "died in the faith," and having witnessed on earth, they now witness in heaven, that Christ is able to preserve and save His Church to the uttermost. The Church still lives—lives like the burning bush on Horeb's side, unconsumed in fire; lives like the bark of Galilee's lake—safe in every storm; lives like the mountain oak that has defied a thousand hurricanes and stands unshaken in its strength; lives like the rock mid ocean's foam—perpetually assailed, perpetually victorious. Nor can the powers of earth or hell, or these combined, prevent the final burst of truth's full day. Judaism, Paganism, and the arrogance of a rampant infidelity are alike imbecile. The truth is indestructible, and the sneer of derision, the scowl of contempt, and the loud laughter of scorn affect it not. The fire has been kindled to its intensest fierceness, and the

sword has been whetted to its utmost keenness of edge, and the waters have been agitated to their deepest depth, to consume, to divide, and to submerge the "truth," but in vain. It still lives, undimmed in its effulgence, unimpaired in its strength, untouched in its veracity, without a wrinkle on its azure brow, "the power of God unto salvation." "He that is our God is the God of salvation." "Wherefore He is able also to save us." But we proceed to notice that He has defended and saved His Church (2nd) from foes within. Ever since the painful difference which separated Paul and Barnabas, the Church has been a theatre of strifes and divisions, more or less acrimonious and bitter. Sad as is the fact, it is no less a fact, that differences in feeling, in spirit, in teaching, in practice have done much to sully the purity, to mar the loveliness, and to check the history of the Church for over one thousand years. Its peace has been assailed and its stability threatened, alike by internal discord, the dissensions of heresy, and the haughtiness of pride. The relaxation of discipline, the peculiarity of many, as well as the splendor and blandishment of power, each and all have done much to subvert, were it possible, the foundations of her strength. The Arian and Pelagian heresies, the mighty and disproportioned antagonist, Popery, together with the gladiatorial exchanges of the Arminian and Calvinian controversialists, all have done much to test the strength and vitality of the Churches of Christ. For ten long and dismal cen-

turies the mighty heresiarch of Popery succeeded in veiling her glory, and distorting her radiant features, leaving the world in almost the sheerest conjecture as to her actual existence at all. Through the dreary roll of those gloomy cycles, humanity—high-souled humanity, lay crushed and bleeding—kings, princes, peoples lay still as a death's sleep—liberty was dead—the lights of heaven were extinguished—virtue was but the shadow of a name, and vice no longer shrunk within minster aisle and cloister cell, but with matted locks, and lustful eyes, reeled into the affrighted and affronted light of day, while the delirious shouts of a debauched humanity proclaimed her queen of the nations. But in the midst of all, “the right hand of Immanuel did valiantly.” From foes without, and foes within, He has nitherto most effectually delivered His Church. In our own days a cloaked and disguised scepticism has put forth its most finished efforts to sap and undermine “the foundation of God.” No longer satisfied with the “Plain of Ono,” it has climbed to the walls of the Holy City. It has most unblushingly assaulted the builders on the scaffold, tampered with the watchmen at their post, and raised insurrections in the streets. Driven from the outer court of science, and an honest philosophy, it has sought a refuge in the holiest of all, and with flaccid sinew and folded arms, sits entrenched beneath the Ark of the Covenant, the outstretched Cherubim and flaming glory. While it does not, and dare not deny the mis-

sion and the work of Christ, it negatives His power and leaves Him nowhere. Many of the pulpits of Christendom, at this moment, totter before the sweep of the simoom of German rationalism—a self-magnifying infidelity. The holiest altar, smote with the incense of its arrogance, and “the broth of its abominable things.” Its distinctiveness is seen, not so much in what it does, as in what it leaves undone. It wounds with a friendly hand, it dishonors by the meagrest glory, and “damns by the faintest praise.” But in the midst, and throughout all phases of opposition the Church still lives; God has still a chosen generation, and a holy priesthood—men whose hearts are sensitive to the minutest stain, and who tremble for the Ark of God. And may we not address the Church in the language of the prophet, “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save; He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing.” Most assuredly in the deliverances He has wrought for His Church, in the constancy of his interposition, and in the saving health of His protection, He has proved Himself mighty to save. Not only, however, in the establishment and preservation of His Church has He displayed His power, but also, and that most unequivocally, in the extent and grandeur of her triumph. It is said that when Constantine took the Church under the guardianship of the imperial banner, that he was favored with a supernatural sign in the

heavens. It was the sign of the once despised cross, with the remarkable inscription, "In this conquer." The cross is the grand secret of the triumph of the Church. And hence the Church, from age to age, high above the roll and cloud of battles, has waved her banners, and, like the thunder against the wind, has gone from conquering to conquer. With songs of triumph from the Jordan to the banks of the Illissus and the Tiber she rushed, and with shouts of victory she bore upon the flying ranks of her foes. We speak of no Grecian myth, of no Utopian fancy, but of something real, of something actual; of something gloriously real, of something divinely actual, when we speak of one chasing a thousand to flight. There is no form of opposition which she has not vanquished. The heartless Deisms, and withering scepticisms of a hundred generations have fallen blenched and blinded with her glory. She has diffused her benignant influences through all the varied ramifications and contingencies of life, and the wilderness and the solitary place are glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. Christendom is the attestation of Christianity, and stands forth the glory and salvation of the world. And despite all warring interests, all conflicting principles, all antagonistic forces, despite everything inimical in the Church and out of the Church; while politicians are aghast and empires are rocking, and the world reels and staggers beneath the burden of its terrible prophecies, in the midst of all the Church

risers in monumental magnificence a sample and an assurance of saving power. Never was there a period when she went forth more stainlessly pure, more essentially strong, more grandly masterful and victorious than at the present hour. "Bright as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners," she confronts the world. And despite the avowed effort of the open foe, on the one hand, and the treachery that stabs the heart it woos, on the other, Christ shall have dominion, and of the increase of His government there shall be no end. We now come to notice the ability of Christ to save, as demonstrated in the conversion of the individual sinner. And here, I may be allowed to say, we witness the most convincing proofs of Divine power. To subdue the mind, and to bend the human will under any circumstances, involving a vaster energy than is required to effect the mightiest mechanical operations. "Give me but certain data, and I can calculate the power that will be necessary to break down a fortress, to raise a mountain, to propel a world"—but who shall tell the power necessary to subdue a wayward and rebellious spirit? Is that spirit in captivity? Then who shall break the bars of its bondage, disimprison it, and clothe it in its pristine loveliness? You reason, but the judgment is unconvinced; you remonstrate, your remonstrance is unheeded; you argue, your argument elicits a stronger prejudice; you put all the power of persuasion, and resistance is doubly resolved. Threat-

ening, persuasion, entreaty are set at defiance. You may have recourse to an attempted coercion; you may tear the flesh, wrench the bone, lacerate the nerve; you may extort a groan, and you may make your subject cry out by reason of an inflicted agony, but the mind is unsubdued. Entrenched in its unconquerable resistance it mocks your efforts, and sets your puny strength at naught. Lust, longing and self-indulgence; avarice, ambition and pride; enmity to God, deep-seated and inveterate; these are its impregnable bulwarks. You may storm them, but no breach is made; you may seek to scale them, but you cannot; yet upon such Jesus has brought His truth to act, upon such the agency of His Spirit has operated, and such are the trophies of His saving power. But my text declares His ability to "save to the uttermost." And oh! how shall we take the gauge and dimensions of that word "uttermost?" The massive pressure of its importance confounds us. The "uttermost"—we take the wings of the morning and sweep the world in quest of its indexed plenitude, we enter the springs of the sea and go in search of its plummetless depth of meaning. It is higher than heaven, what can we do? Deeper than hell, what can we know? We approach it as we approach the ocean, not so much to vision its circumference, as to look, and be excited, and taken captive by the view of its far-heaving majesty, and the roll of its fetterless power. "To the uttermost." Oh, for the force of a mightier utterance, that God may be

magnified in the magnitude of so great salvation. I care not what may be the extent, the aggravation, the heinousness, and the enormity of human guilt, this salvation meets it, measures it, removes it, and God is magnified in the magnitude of the transgression repented, and forgiven. I will suppose a case. I will suppose a man guilty of the grossest violations of the Divine law, of the foulest conspiracy against God and His righteousness, of the most abhorrent and nameless abominations. I will suppose him sinning against early instruction, and early impression, the son of pious parents, whose honored heads he has brought to the grave. I will suppose him mingling with reprobates, and leaguely with infidels, and mocking God, and denying and deriding the Holy Ghost. He shall have the lie upon his lip, the oath upon his tongue, the blasphemy within his heart. The leprosy shall distil in his veins, and the treason cup tremble in his hands; his iniquity shall be as scarlet, and his sin shall be red like crimson; he shall stand the personification of all that is malignant and vengeful, of all that is cold and cruel, of all that is unrelenting and remorseless, with an eye of ice and a heart of stone; he shall have wronged the widow, and robbed the fatherless; his name shall be festering in infamy, and his hands shall drip with the blood of the innocent; his presence shall be as a scourge and a pestilence, and his breathing shall be of threatening and slaughter. Yea, more, he shall be despised and shunned, as a being too foul for

contact with common society; steeped in sensuality, he shall revel in its most abysmal depths; you shall find him in the very porch of perdition, and already singed for endless burning; and yet, above him, and below him, beyond him, I hear a voice proclaiming ye need not go to the pit for I have found a ransom, wherefore He is able to save to the uttermost. That poor, despised wretch of whom we have been speaking, hears the name of Jesus, and utterly petrified as he is, and indifferent as he has been to every plea besides, he melts now. You find him seeking out the courts of the Lord's house; he shrinks from a too searching scrutiny, but you may tell that his conscience has become a terrible battle-ground; that he is no longer the fierce and the tameless man of sin he was, the halitus has passed off, the ferocity has extruded, the savageness has left him; he begs your prayers, his eyes, which had strangely forgotten to weep, are suffused with penitence, and, like another Saul of Tarsus, he cries, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" You see him as he writhes in an unutterable agony of conviction and remorse; you hear his broken utterances as he cries for mercy, and when he stands upon his feet, "redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled," you involuntarily ejaculate, "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?" But so far as this word "uttermost" is concerned, we must leave it to eternity to develop its meaning.



“PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD.”

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”—
PSALM cxvi. 15.



ALL animated nature dies, and death wrests from man the fondest and most tenderly beloved objects of his heart. God so ordered it, and in view of the constantly recurring fact it is not possible that we should forget our own mortality. Yet it is but too true that men live as if they were never to die. One of our religious poets has said that, “All men think all men mortal but themselves,” and the indifference which is commonly manifested by a large proportion of the living would seem to justify the statement. The subject of death is not a pleasant one to contemplate by persons living in a state of alienation from their Maker, and hence it is that the consideration of that solemn and important, but absolutely certain, event is put off from one day to another, until by some afflictive dispensation it is forced upon the unwilling

mind. But however it may be deferred in thought, the fact itself cannot be eluded in any case very long, for it is a matter of divine appointment. By various changes in both animated and inanimated nature man is reminded of his end. The leaf falls from the tree, the sun sets and the moon wanes, and these constant alternates remind us that our life will necessarily have a termination. When man sinned death entered into the world, and from that day the sentence went forth, and through the lapsing ages has been irrevocably executed. "It is appointed unto men once to die." Let us, then, dwell for a little upon the solemn fact introduced to our notice in the text. It may appear trite to say that death is inevitable, but however trite, the fact is none the less deserving of our most serious thought. We cannot evade the destroyer. He lurks about our pathway continually, and is constantly drawing nearer and nearer. There is a stealthiness and a secrecy in his movements which may throw us off our guard, and a mystery in his working calculated to lull our fears, but his stroke is inevitably certain. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" was the warning and the fiat of the Divine Lawgiver, and man having contravened the command, involved himself and his posterity in the consequences of that disobedience. "In Adam all die." Sin brought death into the world with all our woe. Though coming under the irrevocable sentence man is permitted for a time, but an uncertain time, to evade or escape

its execution, still the issue is absolute, and, at least, the delay will be but short. But the physical death entailed by the original transgressors on the whole human race was not the principal or most deplorable result, for spiritual death, then and there, overtook the offender, and his posterity inherited the same dire penalty.

The inevitability of death is proved from its constant reiteration. No matter how long life is, it terminates some day. A man may survive all his friends, and even his entire generation, yet in the end he dies. In the Sacred Record we have instances of such longevity as have not occurred in the post-diluvian world, but on reading their brief biography you will find it invariably ending with "and he died." The good and the bad, the active and the indolent, the highly gifted and the least intelligent, all fare the same; all are gathered to their fathers. They were and are not, they lived and then passed out of sight. This constant reiteration of the event most feared and most dreaded by humanity ought surely to prevent forgetfulness or indifference. The Divine Man Himself, the Lord Christ, having assumed a human form, was obliged to pass through the common ordeal. He might, and did, throw aside many of the weaknesses and infirmities of our nature, and presented a perfect type of manhood in all moral grandeur and excellence, but He must die, and like the rest of men descend into the grave. He did not arm Himself with some weapons of omnipotent

power, and hurl it at the foe, nor did He cause the cold waters of the river to divide as when Moses, clothed with miraculous virtue, severed the Red Sea; but He suffered Himself to be bound and taken prisoner for a brief space by the universal conqueror. In thus dying, however, He projected a glorious ray of heavenly light into the darkness of the sepulchre, and despoiled the tomb of its gloom. Through the same way must His disciples go, and in the same state must they enter, for "where should His dying members rest but with their dying Lord?" You and I must follow, for nothing "is quickened except it die." But God's "dead men shall live, and together with His dead body shall they arise." In order then to the attainment of a perfect Christ-likeness, it is inevitable that even the redeemed and reconciled saints of the Most High, should pass through the dark valley and lie down in the grave. We must needs die and be like water spilled upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." Yet after all, there is so much of painfulness connected with the subject that few persons care to enter upon its contemplation. There is something so melancholy in the fact that death puts a period to a known form of existence which, though chequered with care and trial, is yet so enjoyable that man fears and shrinks from the comparatively unknown state to which that solemn event will introduce him. Here we were born, here we formed pleasant friendships and made acquaintance with many forms of enjoyment. Here we

acquired knowledge and experience which fitted us for living and extracting from nature and society many pure and innocent delights, but death comes and severs us from all those familiar things, closes up the scene, and affixes the seal of eternal silence upon our dwelling. The thoughts of these stern and inflexible consequences produce awe and repulsion, and we cannot bear to dwell upon them. Then, too, though the while admitting the ultimate fact of mortality, men are naturally prone to conceive of it as always far in the future, seldom or never at hand. They feel well, robust and strongly attached to life, and if so, why should they contemplate the decay and decomposition of their frames? Meditation upon such topics saddens them too much, and hence it is almost universally avoided. I would not wish to unnecessarily say anything calculated to increase the sorrows of friends who have lately been bereaved, and yet the retrospection may not be without some salutary uses. We all remember some death-bed scenes which wrung our hearts, but possibly made them better, and the recollection may, perhaps, revive the convictions of duty which, at such times, were experienced with all but compelling power. You can, perhaps, call to mind the tender and almost overpowering looks of affection which gave such character to the countenance of your dying friend. You saw the holy smile playing upon those wan features; you listened with inexpressible hungering for one more word of love from the gentle voice, and

you watch with feeling approaching to agony for another pulsation in the hand you held so firmly grasped, but death had claimed its victim. The last look had been given, the last sigh had escaped the weary heart, the last quiver had agitated the frame, and the desire of your eyes had departed. There was nothing left of the honored sire, the blessed mother, the noble husband, or the idolized wife—nothing left but a fast-changing corpse. The beauty of the soul, though leaving its impress upon the calm face for a little, was passing away, and with Abraham, you ask to bury your dead out of your sight, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” Death demonstrates his power apparently with almost indiscriminate action. To-day he removes the cherub child, to-morrow the blushing maiden or the manly youth, and the next moment his stroke may fall upon the full-grown man or the patriarch well stricken in years. Genius will not allure him into delay, philosophy is powerless to neutralize his stroke, and the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely, will not hold him as a listener.

The white horse, though lean and shadowy, rides down his quarry; and though the rider himself is a mere skeleton, his arm possesses a vigor which none can resist. He goes on conquering and to conquer. Since, then, we can neither persuade, bribe nor delay him, let us seek that preparation which will enable us to meet him with joy and not with grief. “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be

like his." But again, death may be very much nearer than we anticipate. Often has he started, as from an ambuscade, and seized his captives when they never so much as dreamt of his approach. Unseen, unheard, unexpected he aims his dart, and it never fails the mark. Well might the poet wail out

"Dangers stand thick through all the ground,
To push us to the tomb,
And fierce diseases wait around
To hurry mortals home."

Now all men stand in the same jeopardy, all tread the brink of the same precipice, and all may truthfully say as David in his fear of Saul said, "Verily there is but a step between me and death." Indeed, a single sigh or gasp may destroy the order of your life. There is nothing so insignificant which may not cause the death of a human being. But again, death is viewed with awe, because of the fact that it can happen but once, and that it puts a finality to man's intercourse with his kind on the earth. He goes the way whence he shall not return, to that home from which no traveller ever comes back to tell how it fares with him there. It is this finality which makes death a subject of such fearful contemplation to the living. A certain writer has said that dead men are wise, but silent, and that they never reveal the secrets of their condition. They preserve a very rigid taciturnity, and never afford their friends the benefit of their experi-

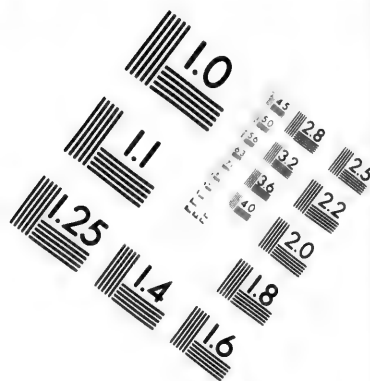
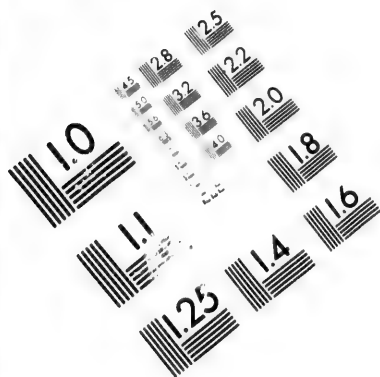
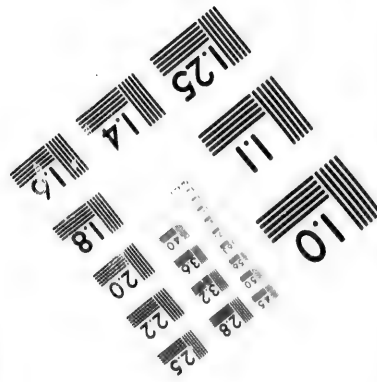
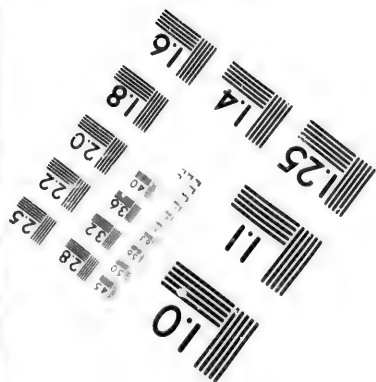
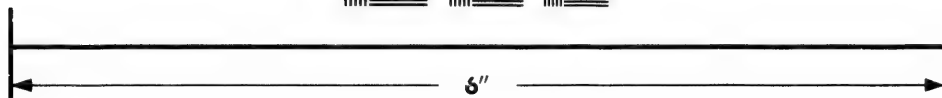
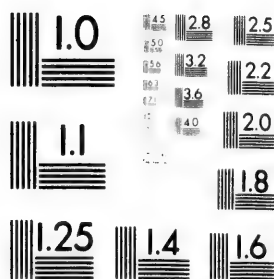


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ence. Their eyes and tongues are so fixed and set that it is impossible to extract ought from them. We are thus left to speculate upon their state, and though eager to know what it is, we instinctively shrink from entering into their dark and fast dormitory. This, indeed, is a fearful phase of man's history, and it is but natural that we should desire intelligence from beyond, if only an echo of the voices we once delighted in. We have gone with our friends to the very margin of the unseen and eternal, and have watched them until they leapt out into "the land of deepest shade." And we have listened for their song as they entered their new abode, but there has been no sound, no response, no reply to our tears. We have followed them as we follow a stream until it enters a thicket, and our further progress is barred; but as we have heard the rushing of the waters beyond and have concluded they were pressing to the ocean, so have we believed that though the grave into which our beloved ones had entered was dark, there was light beyond. We have heard their last words, and the music has lingered in our ears, but it was simply a reverberation, for they spake not again. Only God can overrule death, and it is utterly out of the power of man to arrest its course. It is God that fixes our destiny, and only so far as man trusts in God and acquiesces in His commands, can he be said to be a party to the issues of life. When God says, "Return, ye children of men," they must needs obey His summons. One says, "Thou

hast appointed me bounds, . . . *thou* wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living," and excepted in the case of the suicide, who puts a dagger to his heart and rushes unbidden into the presence of his Maker, God must be held as the arbiter of our life. God rules all things. Properly there is no such thing as chance, accident or fortuitousness. There is no such thing as the independent play of crude storms or unruled elements in the universe, for "God orders all that is." In our unreasoning querulousness we are often prone to say, like Mary, "Lord if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died;" or perhaps, "if such or such means had been used, or if such a physician had been consulted, the result would have been different;" and we sigh and fret at the imaginary causes which have brought about the fatal and afflictive stroke. But, as we have seen, Job understands the matter better, and says, "*Thou* wilt bring me to death." When God, however, removes His people from this scene the event is one fraught with the greatest possible interest even to Himself, for does He not tell us by the mouth of David that their death is precious in His sight. Aye, as one of our sacred songs has it:

"But saints are lovely in His sight,
He views His children with delight;
He sees, their hope, He knows their fear,
And looks and loves His image there."

And so they die, and so they enter into rest, and where they enter there are no social differences such as there are even in the church militant. They are all saints, and all are happy; all inhabitants of the same land of rest, all forever with their Lord. It is proper here, however, to note that these glorified spirits were not originally saints, and moreover that they were not made such by the mere fact of dying. As man lives so he dies, and the saints who die and enter into rest were made saints by divine grace, in fact, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom they were begotten again into a new hope. Hence, if you would that your death were precious in the sight of the Lord, you must be so begotten; you must become the subjects of the transforming power of the Holy Ghost, and not till you do can you lead the life of faith upon the Son of God who loved you and gave Himself for you. Now, in precise proportion of the intimacy of the relation which subsists between the soul and God will be our preciousness in His sight, living and dying. There is such a thing as having the "life hidden with Christ in God," and being "restored to our unsinning state, to love's sweet paradise," and when this is the case then death is precious in the sight of the Lord. But why so precious? The death of the saints of God is precious or greatly cared for by Him, because it is to them a crisis of the greatest importance—a moment of supreme trial, when they need His aid, and as He loved them while they lived, it is

evident that He cannot witness their putting off their clay tabernacle without infinite sympathy. It is precious, because their life was precious; because of what they did and suffered in His service on earth. Here they lived not in vain, but humanity in all its phases and interests was benefited by their labors and example. And in the same ratio as they aided in fertilizing the moral soil of the world, in the same proportion do they realize the heavenly felicity in reversion for the faithful. By their holy walk among their fellows, by their courageous assertion of the truth, by their benevolence and their mercifulness, but most of all by their prayers, they blessed the world and honored God. Nothing in the universe is mightier than prayer. In the past ages it accomplished miracles, and in our day is no less effectual, whatever the sceptic or the scorner may think or say about it. In the 8th chapter of Revelations, and at the 3rd verse, we have an angel "standing at the altar having a golden censer, and there was given to him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of saints upon the golden altar which stood before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God out of the angel's hand; and the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices and thunderings and lightning and an earthquake." Thus are we admonished of the efficacy of faithful prayer: the thunder-

ings and the lightnings and the earthquake being intended, no doubt, to portray the all but omnipotent.

The saints were blessed in their lives, and they are blessed in their death. The death of the saints again is precious in the sight of the Lord, because they are the meed of Christ's sufferings. By faith in the better speaking blood their hearts were renovated, and so far made perfect as to have become fit temples for the indwelling of God. This was "the joy that had been set before Him." In them he saw accomplished the travail of His soul and was satisfied. And now they are coming home. Now they are on the margin and expect to die. Now they are putting off the outward man and preparing to be clothed with their house which is from heaven. Ransomed by Him out of every nation and people and tongue, having overcome the world, they await the summons to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Such being their experience, and such their condition, just come to the brink of the river, is it marvellous that Him whom they have loved unseen should manifest all His preciousness and give them to feel that they are precious in His sight. The saints are precious also because of their unwavering confidence in Christ. Again and again the faithful pastor and other visitors of the sick and dying have been disposed to say, with a certain writer, "By many death-beds I have been, but never saw any like this." Each new instance of the triumph of faith and the supreme consolations of the Gospel in the last

hour have appeared to be more illustrious than any before witnessed. Many have I known, who, looking with calm trust and confidence to Him who is able to save to the uttermost, have just at the point to die exclaimed, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." No evil moral, no evil physical. With a Christian poet, the departing saint often sings:

"And must this body die;
 This well wrought frame decay?
 And must these active limbs of mine,
 Lie mouldering in the clay?
 Corruption, earth and worms
 Shall but refine this flesh,
 Till my triumphant spirit comes
 To put it on afresh.
 Arrayed in glorious grace
 Shall these vile bodies shine,
 And every face and every shape
 Be heavenly and divine."

Is there no evil here then? David says, "I will fear no evil," or as paraphrased, "Strike, King of Terrors, I fear not the blow." No, no! the visions of glory which illumine and consecrate the last hours of the escaping spirit so neutralize the natural dread of the last enemy that he is completely foiled and discomfited, and in holy rapture the saint of God may say, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave!

where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The upright man of Uz evidently anticipated a similar triumph when he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my death worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." No, the dying saint fears no evil, for he has built upon a rock, and is secure of entering into rest, perfect, eternal rest. Blessed, "from henceforth, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors and their works follow them." And yet there would seem to be much in some cases to disturb and afflict the dying man of God. Here is a father suddenly brought face to face with the grim phantom. He is surrounded with wife and children whom he loves as his own soul, and over whom he yearns with a tenderness which words are impotent to express. They have all been accustomed to lean upon him for support, and to them he has been the source of supply and the arm of protection. He looks at them with a hungering love. Oh! who will tell the depth and power of that affection? Perhaps there is a very little child among them, the darling of this manly heart, and upon this little one's face his regards are riveted with an intensity of meaning which only the eyes of dying parents

can show. This faithful, gentle wife, and these tender lambs he can and does commit to the Father of the fatherless in perfect confidence that He will be their friend and protector. Faith soars above fear, even in respect of that little flock, and the pain of parting is more than soothed, it is evercome—for God is there. The death of saints is precious, inasmuch as it exhibits the faithfulness of God. It is precious to the living who witness the divine presence, and see how abundantly He fulfils His promises in nature's darkest hour. Then the death of God's people is precious because it introduces them to His right hand, "where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore." During their earthly pilgrimage He watched their every step; loved, counselled and defended them. As a shade on their right hand, while passing through the wilderness, He has shielded them from the sun's intenser ray; has seen the tears upon their cheek in the hour of trial and agony.

But observe how courageously they fought the good fight and conquered their foes. And now the warfare's past and the faithful soldiers are putting off the harness, never again to go into conflict. As a father who looks with pride upon a noble son who has distinguished himself in honorable fields, so God delights in His saints. Their strife here was but an educational preparation for the companionship of the church and assembly of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. And as a father chastises the

son whom he dearly loves, that he may learn wisdom and obedience, so the Divine Father has often permitted them to be tried, and may Himself have used the rod, but it was that they might be heirs of life. Now they have attained their majority; now they enter upon their inalienable possessions. During our nonage our earthly parents keep us in subjection and control, but when, after having come of age if a son has proved his fitness for important trusts, the father gladly introduces him into new scenes and responsibilities, and makes over to him the means necessary to enable him to commence life on his own account. In the same way the Father Everlasting, when His human offspring have passed through their minority, introduces them to the citizenship of heaven, and to all the joys and felicities which are in reversion for the heirs of immortality. Precious, then, in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints, because it is the consummation of their day of trial, and the era of their introduction to infinite blessedness. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him. They hunger no more, neither thirst they any more. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to fountains of living water, and all tears shall be forever wiped away from their eyes. They have not lived in vain, nor died in vain, and now they are forever with the Lord."

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LECTURES.



MARTIN LUTHER—THE MAN AND HIS MISSION.



WHEN Martin Luther laid his manly hand on the portals of the Reformation, the world was reeling and agonized as in the throes of moral and intellectual death. For ten centuries the heavens had gathered blackness, the earth had been trampled into the most dreadful moral rigidity, while the human mind had become a waste, howling wilderness, "a wilderness of dying thought." Large-eyed science stood stony, moveless, and blind as a statue. No wonders did she see in the heavens above, no secrets did she rifle from the earth beneath; nature to her was a hieroglyphic—nay, a blank. The rocks and the mountains, the seas and the air, the stars and the flowers, unquestioned, retained their mysteries. They scorned to give what man disdained to ask. Philosophy withdrew in contempt from the puerile and inane speculations of the schools. Far above the clouds of

logomachy, she ascended to her native altitude, looked down with indignant scorn upon the sweaty, dirty, verbal gladiators, who strove and struggled for a worthless victory. Star-eyed literature sat on her jewelled throne, and not till the last watch did she deign to shed even a meteoric flash through the darkness of the night. Humanity—high-souled humanity—lay crushed and bleeding; while iron heels trampled upon her quivering breast, and ruthless hands tied her free-born tongue. The Church had been rifled of her vitality, her glory had departed, she was dead—yea, worse than dead—she was putrid. Every nameless abomination, every disgusting practice, every domestic and social wrong, every vice of every kind, was perpetrated, pursued, defended, and that with the most unblushing effrontery. The lights of heaven were extinguished, and the beauties of the earth withered like unsunned flowers. Liberty was dead, every better feeling was lost, and virtue was but the shadow of a name. The immorality that disgraced the palace of the pontiff disgraced also the ranks of the priesthood, and the prostrate millions of the race were lost to every feeling of right and of religion. Man everywhere “played such pranks before high heaven as might well make the angels weep.” From the general wreck, however, the Lord of providence and grace reserved to Himself a witness. Martin Luther was selected, singled out to revolutionize and to transform. And certainly the adaptation of any given means to the

accomplishment of any given purpose was never more strikingly realized than in this sublime instance. His amazing powers of intellect, his inexorable fixedness of purpose, his more than human strength of nerve, his intellectual and warlike energy of mind, his unwonted loftiness of spirit, his zeal, his magnanimity, his manly eloquence, above all, the deep rolling flood of his affection for the Lord of Hosts, conspired to perfectly fit him to the niche Divine Providence designed him to occupy. He came upon the theatre of life another Sampson Agonistes, "with plain, heroic magnitude of mind and celestial vigor, armed with strength sufficient, and command of heaven to free his country." And, launching his bark upon the great deep of human wretchedness, he opened fire upon the bristling ramparts of popedom, hurled his volleyed thunders at incarnate despotism, and shook the world to its centre.

"As he moved along his path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the bravest held his breath—
For a time."

His colossal reputation looms out on the rim of the Dark Ages, like some giant mirage, magnified by the eccentric condition of the atmosphere upon which it was reflected. But upon a nearer contemplation of his character, he seems to come down to us from the cloud and the mountain-top, his face seems lit up as with condensed lightning gleams—radiant from his

intercourse with God. There is an inexpressible grandeur of daring about Martin Luther, which appeals mightily to our sympathies, and claims our unbounded admiration. His isolated standing at bay, confronted by the hosts of papal Europe—a position chivalrously assumed, and more than heroically maintained—takes our hearts by storm. Alone and solitary he menaced the tiaraed atrocity of the ages—broke the fetters of bondaged truth, and sent the daughters of God free among the sons of men. Seen through the haze of two hundred and fifty years, he seems to us to stand girt with the most awful grandeur that ever fell to the lot of a human being. And were we summoned to furnish to other beings in other parts of the universe a model man, a specimen of manhood in its mightiest growth, in its sturdiest development, we would point to the miner's son at Mansfeldt, to the beggar boy in the streets of Eisenach, to the Augustine monk at Erfurt, to the delegated proctor in the schools of the Vatican, to the conquering Reformer bearding despotism in his den—to Martin Luther, opening the Bible, and swearing it should "*never, NEVER be shut again!*"

This champion of the world's mightiest revolution, was born at Eisleben, in the county of Mansfeldt, in the upper circle of Saxony, and that on the "midnight dreary" of November 10th, 1483. In this, no less than in other instances, "the child was father to the man." In Martin's constitution there was a certain

dash of melancholy, which, early in life, inspired him with a love of the supernatural and mysterious. While yet a child he was sent to school, where, it would seem, from his own account, he passed through a rather severe ordeal of physical discipline. "In one morning," says he, "I was whipt fifteen times." But he soon distinguished himself by his self-reliance, his zeal, his love of books, and the soft and genial flow of his Latin verses.

Spiritualities, invisibilities, moonshine cosmogonies, and endless day-dreams, were all realities, terrible realities, with young Luther. And, to wean him from such reveries, such shapeless vagaries of the heated brain, he was sent, at fourteen, to the public school at Magdeburg, and in the following year to the seminary for youths at Eisenach, where his proficiency was such as, at least to stand prophetic of his future greatness. Here, as was common with the poorer German students, he was wont to sing his plaintive ditties at the door, alike of the wealthling and the peasant; and, as he sang, so he lived. Picture to yourselves the incipient Reformer wading through the deep snow of his German home, with the frost-belt around his shivering frame, his sweet young voice freezing on his lips, singing, if perchance he may gain an ear, if perchance he may melt a heart, if perchance he may live. It did so transpire, in the providence of God, that while one day he was pouring out the cadences of an oft-repeated ballad at the door of a wealthy widow,

he so attracted her attention, he so moved her heart, he so completely mastered her, by the sweetness of his voice, the melting tenderness of his eye, the general but subdued spirituality of his countenance and his demeanor, so affecting throughout, that she, the immortal Dame Cotta, took him into her house, and enabled him to pursue his studies for the space of four years. Under such circumstances, under auspices so favorable and providential, Luther applied himself to literature; he read voraciously; nothing came amiss—history, philosophy, poetry, and ethics, all claimed and all secured his attention. Music, however, had a special charm, and it became a sort of element in which his passions lived. He read the poets with an almost awful avidity, touched his lute with the hand of a master, and grouped around him many of the mightiest spirits of the age. At this point many of his friends sought to dissuade him from the study of divinity for that of law. Divine providence, however, interposed and overruled this step, and, he again bent his energies to the study of theology. When about twenty-one years of age, while walking in the field with his young and beloved friend Alexis, a sudden thunderbolt struck his companion dead at his feet. At the sight of so painful a spectacle, Luther began seriously to think upon his latter end, for “in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” It was the age of monkery, and no better notion of preparing for heaven was then entertained than by shutting

up the living man in a cell, little larger or lighter than his sepulchre, playing at mortmain, as far as possible, in the grave-clothes of cowl and hood, like a shroud—feeding on ashes, affecting silence and solitude, and gazing upon relics and dead men's bones. Over the still and exanimate frame of his beloved Alexis, Luther made a solemn vow to abjure the world and assume the cowl. From a vow thus rashly made he did not seek to free himself; and hence, on the seventeenth day of August, 1505, he entered the Augustine monastery at Erfurt, and at once became remarkable for his mortifications, fastings and prayers. The Faculty of Theology at Paris had just issued the memorable declaration that religion was undone if the study of Greek or Latin were permitted—a declaration, by-the-bye, which stands in European history like the obelisks in the Nile floods—a landmark by which to gauge the depths of papal inundation on Christendom. A very popular friar, too, had just given to the world the sublime discovery, “that the New Testament is a book full of daggers and poison; and that whosoever should become enamoured of that would at once be transformed into a Jew.” In 1507, however, an old copy of the Scriptures fell into the hands of Luther. He had never, as yet, seen the Bible, beyond the fragments of it read in the mass; he was, however, already ordained, and when his ignorance became painfully apparent to his mind, he felt bitterly the Saviour's reproach, “Art thou a

master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" But though, like the Jewish ruler, he had come to the Word of God in darkness, he soon found it to be a light to his feet, and a lamp to his path. He entered upon the study of the Scriptures with all his wonted fervor and earnestness, yea, with even a greater zeal than that with which he had already mastered the sciences. He soon found his knowledge increasing, his light augmenting, and his difficulties melting away, like the mountain mist before the rising sun. But mingled with those new and precious musings, as a painful and neutralizing element, were those emotions consequent upon his German education, the spirit of the society in which he moved, and the times in which his lot was cast. All his previous training, all his social antecedents, all immediately surrounding influences, were in decided and desperate antagonism to his new and higher aspirations. And there were seasons of such profound dejection, of such measureless anxiety, of such earnest and unparalleled struggling, that, like the lonely prophet he could only pray, "Now, Lord, take away my life." The thunders of the law stunned him to the heart. Through every avenue of his consciousness he was startled and stricken. He took his stand at the base of the mountain of terror. Upon his eye was the lightning's glare, upon his ear the thunder's crash, upon his face the tempest's blast, and, upon his mind the awful, the unutterable sense of a present God. We can almost

imagine his attitude, as he seems to hear the adjacent rocks split, and the neighboring hills part asunder. Sinai frowns upon him, the ground upon which he stands seems to reel, and heave, and toss, as though hell were convulsed at his coming. The lurid gleam that flashed upon him seemed more of darkness than of light, more of hell than of heaven. In the unplummeted depths of his soul's agony we see him prostrate, we hear him cry out, as if in madness, "Oh, wretchedness! Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" In, and throughout, the whole range of moral renovation we know of no instance of keener distress, or of profounder mental anguish. He rushed from oracle to oracle; from friend to friend, with the piteous, forlorn, heart-breaking wail,

"Cans't thou not minister to a mind diseased?
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow?
Raze out the written troubles of the brain?
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
That weighs upon the heart?"

It was thus with Luther, when in the gush and uprushing of his anguish he met the problem, which the blood of thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oil could neither soften nor reduce. With this unwieldy and terrible problem, however, he continued to strive and struggle, when lo! the cloud which enveloped him was rent, when through its open fissures the

day spring burst in light upon his intellect, and when in its blessed beamings he was enabled to read the words which to him were as a resurrection fiat, "The just shall live by faith." He seized the promise with a startling eagerness; he held it with a convulsive, a sort of death-grip, tenacity, and he found himself erect on the "Rock of Ages." Luther was now a new man, "renewed, regenerated, disenthralled;" and his life henceforth became a sublime consecration and a matchless sacrifice. He did not at first see how that this doctrine of faith, upon which he had cast himself body and soul, came into collision with the whole Romish constitution—how that it rifled His Serene Holiness of all infallibility in matters of conscience, and left man responsible to God alone. He, however, was not long ere he discovered this; he had been studying his own heart in the light of the truth; he brought that truth to bear as a test upon the Church—it was enough he found her sadly defective; and he must and will declare it, though he hazard his head in doing so. The high esteem in which Luther was held, and his hold upon the confidence of the Church will appear if we remember that he was selected proctor to represent some seven monasteries in an appeal to the Pope. This visit to Rome was of immense moment to the Reformation; his actual inspection of the nunneries, colleges, churches and social circles in the Vatican, effectually releasing him from his fabulous impressions of its metropolitan relation to the Church Catholic, as

the fountain head of evangelical sanctity. He went to Rome blind as a bat, he returned having received his sight. He went to Rome a worshipper of almost every stone in the Holy City, he returned minus his idolatry. He went to Rome with something more than veneration for the successor of St. Peter, he returned with something more than contempt. He went to Rome as he would enter the vestibule of heaven, he returned wailing forth his awful Eureka, "If there is a hell, Rome is built over it." He was disabused, root and branch, of his old impressions of its oracular authority, fell back upon his Bible, and the Reformation was safe. He found that the Pontiff had more "holiness" in his title than in his estate, and he was wounded, and troubled, and disgusted; and he wept as a hero weeps when he found that he had garnered up his heart in worthlessness. A certain Dominican friar, Tetzel by name, had been licensed a vendor of indulgences, or permission to commit certain sins. He was himself a man of loose and dissolute habits, but he had, nevertheless, a wonderful power over the masses. Luther had heard of him before, and had noted his doings; but now that the Holy Father had given him his famous, or rather infamous, commission, he challenges him to the closest combat. For a time the battle made noise enough, and Tetzel attempted to burn Luther in effigy in the streets of Wittenberg. But the sturdy Luther was altogether too muscular for poor Tetzel, and Tetzel, sheltering himself behind

the Pope, Luther came souse upon the Pope also. For awhile the Pontiff looked upon his movements as upon the vagaries of some unbalanced enthusiast. But the successful manœuvring of Luther soon made him tremble in his capitol. All Germany was thrown into a state of suspense. Every eye was fixed on Wittenberg. What would the daring doctor do next? Would he continue firm? These were questions everywhere put—and they were soon answered—answered with a terrific emphasis. Luther responded first, by publishing a scathing manifesto, entitled, "Against the rule of anti-Christ." The echo of that thunderbolt lingers among the hills of Germany—yea, every hill and vale in Christendom vibrates with the crash to the present hour. The Pope had driven Luther to the wall, and he turned at bay like a lion, branded the wearer of the triple crown as a heretic, an impostor, a blasphemer, a calumniator, and the anti-Christ. He was now fairly in the lists—foot to foot, face to face with his antagonist—prepared to whip or be whipped, to conquer or to die. He took the part of abused truth, of outraged virtue, of his insulted God; the odds were all against him, but he was roused, his blood was up, he was "on his muscle," and he determined if at all, he would fall as Samson fell, and not a Philistine should survive to tell the tale.

I know not how it is, but it is utterly impossible for me to witness an earnest struggle, with the seconds all on the other side, manfully struggling for victory,

and withhold my sympathy. And, if any man, in a hand-to-hand encounter with the "world," whether in the field for daily bread, or on the marts of commerce, or at the political hustings, or in the arena of ecclesiastical polemics—if any man, wrestling with the great "world," knocks the leg from under the unwieldy giant, I hold that he has an indefeasible right to tread on his neck, and walk upon his high places. Thus it was with Luther, and if it is true that a noble cause ennobles fight, then the noblest cause ennobled him. In the midst, however, of his stern life-struggle, and in the intervals of his fiercest onsets with his disproportioned foe, his constitutional melancholy would often diffuse his eye, but it led him also to play the David to his own gloomy hallucinations—calming his soul by his lute and voice, attuned to the soothing melodies which connect his memory with the softer associations of music and pathos. As, however, the greatness of the very greatest of our kind, has been no less manifest in many of the little matters of life, than in their boldest and grandest achievements, I will, by your permission, and at the risk of not observing a strictly chronological order—but in order to give you a more complete picture of the man—visit Luther in his moments of relaxation. He did unbend, "and was wont to enter, with the heartiest relish, into the innocent convivialities of his friends; his broad humor and raillery betokening the rest of a master mind, abdicating an habitual sovereignty over other men to become, for a passing hour, their companion."

There was a wondrous playfulness about this man, and in one of his playful moods, although he knew he was playing with a bull that had horns, play he must. He had vicar to the right of him, and vicar to the left of him, and pontiff before him, and all the world wondered! But marry he would, and marry he did, and, when married he was, declared, "No one had blundered." His setting aside, in one of his playful moods, the detested celibate, was a piece of the most withering irony—a piece of the most matchless daring upon record. Of course, he had vowed never to do it, but he concluded that it was a rash vow, and hence it was best to repent, and sin no more. Neither did he "blame his partial fancy"; his Catharine de Bora was young, and she was beautiful, and she was accomplished, and—and she loved him. Moved alike by his eloquent philippics against sacerdotal celibacy, and an admiration of his holy boldness, she consented to share with him the odium and the heroism, and whatever might be the result, of such a precedent. She was a nun, and had a vow to break; and hence, from a twofold matrimonial sacrilege the drawfed and homeopathic prophets of the day, predicted the birth of anti-Christ. In due course, however, six fine, prattling, bright-eyed, chubby Lutherans negatived their ribald prophecy. Luther's own defence of the case was, like the man, clear, direct and straightforward. "He had inculcated," he said, "on others, the advantage of the conjugal state; and,

as a Christian, he was bound to enforce his precept by his example." And all that need be added to the argument is the converse proposition. It were well if those who uphold the celibates as a sacerdotal theory were in the habit of illustrating its virtues, "not with their lips only, but also in their lives." Unless it be maintained that the unnatural contract of monkery and nunnery is binding upon the parties for life, no matter what conscientious change of views might thereafter lead them to abominate that contract, with the other abominations of the same system, then I hold that Luther had a better right to marry, which is God's ordinance, than to patronize the celibates, which is man's device. "But the vow, the vow, that was a bar against matrimony," says the man with the beam in his eye. It was, but then it was notoriously the bar sinister; and it was better on the part of Luther, with the might of a Samson, to bear away the gates of the harlot city, "bar and all," than to be taken captive in the harlot's army.

Luther's habitual reverence for woman, was, at once an instinct and a doctrine. And hence he was not merely a fond, but in a most touching sense, a courteous husband. His view of the relation of man and wife partook of the same originality that characterized his other conceptions. He observed, that when the first woman was brought to the first man, to receive her name, he called her, not wife, but mother, "Eve, the mother of all living;" than which a more eloquent

word never fell from the lips of Demosthenes himself. A happier home than Luther's was not to be found even in the domestic fatherland of Germany. He gaily said to his wife one day, "If I were going to make Eve again, I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of ever finding one in any other way." Over one of his infants, softly sleeping on his mother's breast, Luther moralized thus, "That babe and everything that belongs to us, is hated by the Pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils, yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies, he simply looks, and laughs, and sucks and lets them storm as they like." The following letter written to his eldest boy during the Diet of Augsburg, will be listened to by parental ears with fully as much, perhaps even more, interest than the five confessions submitted to the Emperor on that famous occasion. He writes: "Grace and peace be with thee, my dear little boy! I rejoice to find that you are attentive to your lessons and your prayers. Persevere my dear child, and when I come home I will bring you a pretty present." (He then proceeds to put in an allegory, his favorite view of the enjoyment of heaven, as being more in unison with the constitution of the human creature, and less refined a way to such a point of evanescent spirituality, as, in some people's celestial theories, neutralize or rob them of their attraction.) "I know," said he, "of a beautiful garden full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the

trees eating apples, and pears, and cherries, and nuts, and plums. They jump and sing, and are full of glee ; and they have pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. As I went by this garden, I asked the owner of it whose children those were ? And he said they are the good children who love to say their prayers and learn their lessons, and who fear God. Then I said to him : ‘ Dear sir, I have a boy, little John Luther, may not he too, come to this garden and eat these beautiful apples and pears, to ride those pretty little horses, and to play with the other children ? ’ And the man said, ‘ If he is a very good boy, if he says his prayers, and learns his lessons, he may come, and he may bring with him little Philip and little James. ’ So I said to the man, ‘ I will go and write to my dear little John and teach him to be good, and to say his prayers, and to learn his lessons, that he may come to this garden. ’ I commit you to God. From your papa, who loves you,—Martin Luther.” And there were seasons of domestic sorrow, and home grief—then theology and polemics gave way to the voice of nature, and when this granite peak, who could defy other elements, melted, like Horeb at the touch of God. He lost a beautiful child, his sweet and evanescent Magdalene, whom the Lord took to Himself. Just listen to his apostrophe ! “ Such is the power of natural affection, that I cannot endure this without tears and groans, or rather, that utter deadness of heart which baffles all utterance. At the

bottom of my soul are engraven her looks, her words, her gestures, as I gazed at her in her lifetime, or on her death-bed. My beautiful, my dutiful, my gentle daughter! Even the death of Christ—and what are all other deaths compared with His?—cannot tear me, as it should, from the thought of this; she was so young, so playful, so lovely, and so full of love!" Let me take but one more domestic scene—take Luther as a master. Mark his social gratitude to his old servant, John, who was leaving the family. "We," says he, writing to his wife, "must dismiss old John with honor. We know that he has always served us faithfully, and as became a Christian servant. You need not remind me that we are not rich. I would gladly give him ten florins if I had them, but do not let it be less than five. He is not able to do much for himself. Think how this can be raised. There is that silver cup that might be pawned. Sure I am that God will not desert us. Adieu!" There speaks Martin Luther! And it is just such little trifling incidents, which give us the side of the Reformer, rough-hewn as he appeared—which was "natural, simple, affecting," and which shows his greatness no less than his mightiest victories. And Luther loved an innocent joke, too, and so do I, and so do you. His conscious sincerity enabled him to afford it. He said, "God made the priest, and the devil set about an imitation, but making the tonsure too large, he produced a monk." But pensive and even melan-

choly broodings were the more customary food of his over-burdened soul. "Forty years more life," said he, "I wouldn't purchase paradise at such a price." And yet again, with all this fatigue of life, his contemplations of death were, at times, solemn even to sadness. "I preach, write and talk about dying," said he, "with a greater firmness than I really possess, or than others ascribe to me." Luther's enemies have found ample food for mirth, and even for contempt, in the wild visions, the grotesque fancies, the haunting of devils, and I know not what, by which he was at times disturbed. Intense study, deranging the digestive organs of a man whose bodily constitution required vigorous exercise, and whose mind had been stored in early life with the wildest myths and legends of German literature, fully accounts for, and almost demands, such mental phantasmagoria, the presence of which would be more natural than their absence. So far from abating our estimate of Luther's mental power, his hallucinations seem rather to enhance it. The infirmities of our nature are the real measure of our strength. It was far easier for the athletic Samson to rend the "withes" of the Philistines, than to snap the "tresses" of Delilah; had he broken the latter his self-vanquishment had forever eclipsed his victories over the uncircumcised. For a man of Luther's constitutional habits of reverence, and, alas! of superstition, to hush all memories of the past, to tear himself from the altar and the gods of his fathers, to become the leader

in the unparalleled siege of "right" against "wrong," and to roll the tide of war into the very camp of the foe, indicates an antecedent *self*-conquest at once absolute and glorious. For a whole decade he had hesitated; for ten long years he had halted—had done his best to avoid a collision. But when the sword was once drawn, then the scabbard was flung to the winds, and Luther, lifting the blade aloft, swore by Him that liveth forever that it should never be shut or sheathed again. "To the language of the fathers, of men, of angels, and of devils," he writes, "I oppose neither antiquity, nor numbers, but the simple word of the Eternal Majesty, even the Gospel which they themselves acknowledge. Here is my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. At Leipsic, at Augsburg, and at Worms, my spirit was as free as the flower of the field." When Dr. Scharf said, "What are you about? They wont allow this." "But what if they must allow it?" was the peremptory reply. He can hesitate no longer, he can be timid no more. "The man," says he, "who would command in the tempest, must battle with the rage of the elements, and he whose soul is among lions, must roar with a voice like them." And he did roar as he sniffed the carnage. Or, like Job's war-horse, he pawed in the valley, and shook his mane on the mountain-top; and as he smelt the distant battle, and listened to the thunder of the captains and the shouting, he said, "Aha!" The princes of Germany, and their ministers;

Henry the Eighth, and his chaplains ; the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists ; the Universities of Cologne and Louvaine ; Charles and Leo ; Adrian and Clement ; Papists, Jesuits, Aristotelians, and all the devils (which last were no moonshine to Martin), those were the hosts against whom, single-handed, he fought, and over whom, single-handed, he triumphed. Ancient history immortalizes the name of one Horatius Cocles, a man with one eye, who alone opposed the whole army of the Etrurians at the head of a bridge, while his comrades behind him were cutting off communication with the other shore. When the bridge was destroyed the indomitable hero, though wounded by the darts of his enemies, dashed into the Tiber, and buffeting its saucy waves, he landed with his armor in his hands. Luther, with a single eye to the glory of God, kept the powers of Catholic Europe at bay, while his fellow-reformers were effectually cutting off communion with the papacy forever. When the work of demolition was completed, harnessed in the panoply of God, he threw himself into the River of Life that divided them, and, though wounded by the floating fragments of a demolished hierarchy, he bore upon the billows till he landed on the banks of an achieved religious freedom.

“What ! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell,
Front Rome’s far-reaching bolts, and scorn her frown ?
Brave Luther answered, ‘Yes !’ That thunder’s swell
Rocked Europe, and discharmed the triple crown.”

In a letter to Spalatin, he says : " The Elector will not suffer me to write, and I, too, will not suffer the Elector not to suffer me to write. Rather would I destroy yourself, the Elector, and the whole world forever. It is very fine, forsooth, to hear you say we must not disturb the public tranquillity, while you allow the everlasting peace of God to be disturbed." Again, though a little in advance of chronology, but in order to show the matchless bravery of the man, I will, by your permission, take you to the Diet of Worms. On the 16th day of April, 1521, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the Marshal of the Empire appeared to conduct Luther to the Diet. With his spirit calm and unruffled Luther left his home, preceded by the herald and followed by the marshal. The streets were lined with eager and sympathetic spectators, the house-tops were thronged, every window was filled, every spot from which the man could be seen held an anxious occupant. They reached the hall—every avenue and every door was blocked up, and the imperial guards had to force an entrance for Luther. Luther entered. There sat Charles, whose dominions embraced two worlds ; duly robed, the electors of the Empire ; eighty dukes, eight margraves, thirty prelates, seven ambassadors, the deputies of five cities, a number of princes and sovereigns, counts and barons, with the Pope's nuncios, and many others. A certain old general had just whispered in his ear the words, " Poor monk ! thou art going to face a more formidable foe than ever I, or

my comrades, have met on the bloodiest field." But Luther maintained his fortitude. And, when the rustle and the hum of the preceding moment died away, and all the air a solemn stillness held, the Chancellor arose, and put these questions to Luther: "Dost thou admit that these books were written by thee? If so, wilt thou retract these books, or their contents? Or, dost thou persist in the things which thou hast advanced?" These questions were varied and repeated, and repeated and varied; but Luther stood immovable. The proceedings were then wound up by the question: "Will you, or, will you not retract?" Luther replied, "I can and will retract nothing; I will give my liberty and my life into the hands of the Emperor, but my Bible never." And raising himself to his full stature, he said, "Here I am, I cannot do otherwise; God help me! Amen!" That deep and solemn "Amen," rent the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom—the emperor sat on a splitting throne—and Romanism was chilled to the very heart. "Amen!" it was only a word, and yet the peal of a trumpet, the wail of a distant storm, the wild screech of delirious tempests, the deep maniac mutterings of the approaching earthquake, all are as nothing to its mighty and decided effect. He entered Worms, the subject of gloomy apprehensions, but to those who had thought to dissuade him from going thither, he simply replied, "Though they kindle a fire from Wittenberg to Worms, though its flames reach to the

heavens, yet would I on, I would go through, I would appear before them, I would enter the jaws of this behemoth, and would cry aloud from my heart for the Lord of Hosts." And he did enter, and he confronted them; and, stern, grand, isolated, masterful, victorious, he left them to compare notes, to foot up, and to count the loss. The mighty echoes of his thundering "Amen" still travelled on, and as they fell on England, Scotland, Holland, half Germany, and the Scandinavian nations, the people arose, and burst the fetters which ten centuries had been employed to rivet. But to return. The whole affair assumed the aspect of a public duel between the lordly son of the Medici and the lowly son of the Mansfeldt miner. Both entered the lists, both determined to give and take no quarter. And in the shock of a conflict which then shook the earth, and shall yet once again shake all nations, it was thrust for thrust, lunge for lunge; not a blow was dealt on the one side which was not returned with greater vigor and more deadly effect on the other. The Pontiff, like the mailed giant of Gath, advanced, confident in the brute strength of sword and spear; while Luther, like David, went forth with a single sling and stone, but a stone chipped, as it were, from the Rock of Ages; and the result was the overthrow of Romanism, and the decapitation of papal supremacy in the German empire. Those, the first acts of Protestantism, seemed to form a grand climacteric of audacity that left nothing bolder or braver to be done.

But Luther had a bolder step in reserve. He determined to out-pope the Pope. If the Pontiff had excommunicated Luther, Luther excommunicates the Pontiff. If there had been a bonfire for Luther's books, there should be a bonfire for the Pope's also. He was fierce, he was mad with zeal for the Lord of Hosts, and even through fire he still pursued his way. On December 10th, 1520, the walls of the University of Wittenberg bore a public notice inviting the attendance of the professors and students at nine o'clock on the morrow morning. They were to meet at the east gate—the emblematic quarter of the Resurrection—as if from the fire to be kindled there, or rather its ashes, there should ultimately arise the Phoenix of a regenerated Christianity. A large concourse of doctors, professors and students gathered themselves together, scarcely knowing by what secret magnetism the intrepid monk had attracted them to himself, and exercised over their minds such a mighty moral gravitation. Many of them were doubtless trembling on the brink of the Rubicon, which they at least had not yet transgressed, and were, perhaps, loath to take the final irrevocable step. The centripital force of habit, education, tradition, prejudices, and numbers which bound them to the Apostolic See, was counteracted by the centrifugal influence of Truth and Righteousness, which impelled them to the side of the Reformer. Still the mass of them, perhaps, like Israel on Mount Carmel, were halting between two opinions, till alike, in a spiritual and

material sense, they realized a God that answered by fire. It was a crisis! a crisis where the hesitation seemed sacred to the parting infirmity of human nature, but where the decision was hallowed by the triumphs of Divine grace. They were not held long in suspense. Presently Luther appeared, habited, perhaps for the last time, in his Augustinian cowl, as though he had put on the papal livery to give an emphasis to that act by which he was to abandon its service forever. The lofty eye of the Reformer was seen scanning the learned host, in the midst of whom he strode like an officer of the Hebrews on the eve of battle, saying, "What man is there among you who is fearful and of a faint heart, let him go, and return to his home, lest his brother's heart fail as well as his heart." Or, like Scotland's hero,

"Wha can be a traitor knave,
Wha can fill a coward's grave ;
Wha sae base as be a slave,
Let him turn and flee."

He found himself involuntarily at the head of a mighty movement, and he led them like a column of the Church militant to the solemn tournament. A dense mass of enthusiastic thousands hailed their approach with those thunders of applause, the dread artillery of the million, which shakes the thrones of despots, and strikes a paralysis into their guilty souls. A pile of combustibles was already reared upon the ground,

and one of the oldest masters of arts, the snows on whose venerable brow, like an Arctic crater, had by no means quenched, or even cooled, the natural fire of his heart, stepped forward, just beyond the ring of the crowd, and setting fire to the heap, he stood watching the process of ignition with the yearning of a Parsee. The works of the righteous incendiary broke forth into a blaze, and just as the flames rose furiously, licking their ruddy tongues like beasts of prey hungering for a meal, Luther was seen approaching, and throwing into the roaring jaws of the element Gratian's "Abridgment of the Canon-Law," the "Decretals," the "Clementines," and the "Extravagantes" of the Pope. He stood watching their consumption with a silence so deep, so reverent, so awe-stricken, that the very crackling of the fagots was audible in the ears of the vast multitude, and seemed to ignite a burning echo in their hearts. Winter though it was, the ancient sun smiled gaily on their new Christmas bonfire, as though he recognized in its comparatively feeble glare, the dawn of a higher and holier lustre than his own; when the dayspring from on high should revisit benighted Christendom and proclaim within the dimness of minster aisle and cloister cell, "Let there be light." When this voluminous mass of papal forgeries and tyrannies had been consumed, and a breathing of "the wind, that bloweth where it listeth," was already scattering their ashes on the heads of the vast multitudes, as though symbolic of their repentance, Luther

was seen to lay his manly hand on the Pope's "bull"—a hand that trembled, not with fear, but with that emotion inseparable from so tremendous a crisis, and lifting it aloft, like the ancient wheat-sheaf before the altar of burnt incense, "In the sight of God and man," he cried, "Because ye have troubled the body of the Lord, therefore let eternal fire trouble you;" and he shook it as the apostle shook off the viper at Melita into the fire. The superhuman grandeur of that act burst the pent-up stillness of the mighty crowd—it broke its way through the popular heart, and there arose from earth to heaven such a wild, delirious shout as seemed to fling its echo beyond the skies. The free spirit of Germany revelled in the luxuriant magnanimity of the great fact, and when the Reformer quietly moved back toward the city, the electric spark ran its jubilant shock through every heart, and doctors, professors, students, soldiers; populace, men, women and children, followed Luther into Wittenberg—some laughing, some crying, some singing, some praying, some shouting, some ejaculating, clapping their hands, and dancing their feet, and tossing their heads, and lifting their hearts, and in one grand earth-shaking hallelujah chorus, shouting, "Glory to God and the Bible, and long life to Luther! the liberator of their German Fatherland!"

Thus the fire of Protestantism was kindled, and He who supplied the widow's oil and meal has kept it burning to the present hour. And despite many a

blast from the old quarter, it is yet destined to burn, till it shall have illuminated every region, and purged every atmosphere, and respectfully lighted popery from the world. I know that there are those who affirm that the liberty of conscience granted to the masses, the privileges they enjoy and the independence they assert, will one day prove fatal to Protestantism, but assuredly they are mistaken. Nay, there is an incipient Protestantism at work, in the darkest and most despotic of systems. There is a commingling of elements, a shaking of foundations, a rocking of thrones, a rising of power, which shall yet blanch the cheek of every despot, and palsy his iron heart. This spirit so mightily at work everywhere, is already changing the aspect of society, so that the colossal form of the oldest tyrannies is beginning to collapse and wither away.

The principles for which Luther contended so nobly are the master elements in the world's freedom to-day. Their development has been retarded, and the old, sly, far-seeing foe has sought, through many a generation, to hold them back; but all alive and bristling with an ever-increasing strength, we find them revolutionizing Europe, shaking its oldest monarchies, splitting its most ancient thrones, and scattering its most radiant diadems to the winds. Those principles which have given the Britain of to-day the most extended empire, the most illustrious throne, and incomparably the most virtuous sovereign in

British annals. Those principles which actuated the grand old Pilgrim Fathers, and through them giving to the American continent the greatest, the most thoroughly self-renovating, in every sense the most magnificent Republic the world has ever seen. Those principles which are as old as virtue, as venerable as truth, as sacred as justice, as majestic as righteousness, and as firm as the pillars of the universe—those principles can never fail till the songs of the ransomed shall float on every breeze, and the shouts of a liberated humanity shall proclaim the earth restored to God.

The mighty religious revolution inaugurated by Martin Luther, has transfused its beneficent genius through almost all the varied ramifications and dependencies of human society. It has taught the ruler how to rule, and the ruled how to obey. It has softened the relentless rigours of despotism, and tamed the haughty insolence of conquest. It has nerved the soul of the philosopher, and given enfranchisement to the proudest sons of science. It has liberated the conscience of man, and disimprisoned his manly independence. It has opened the portals of living truth, and choked the censorship of the press in the mightiest nations of the earth. It has unmanacled the conscience, untrammelled the thought, and wrenched the padlock from the lips of the world's truest benefactor. It has thawed the frost-bound charities of the great, deepened the channels of general benevolence, widened the sphere of our highest activities, and caused the

desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. In the wide wilderness of moral and mental death it has planted the tree of life; and in the wild realms of blackest desolation it has kindled a fire that shall never go out. This it hath done—and yet, it is still going forward, conquering and to conquer. It has recently resulted in the most startling upheavals on the European continent; and beneath the shadow of the oldest monarchies, aristocracies, and despotisms the nursling of liberty is strangling the serpent that assailed its cradle, and is giving the world assurance of a better reign. The systems of delusion and of hypocrisy which seemed to hold Europe in vassalage, rushing into deadly strife, seem destined to be shattered in the deadly collision. Imperious potentates, in the height of their ambition, are turning pale before a power which “bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.” Beneath the withering glances of this spirit of liberty, papal anti-Christ is withering in convulsive death-pangs; the Greek Church is rending her meretricious garments; and the false prophet, with his blood-stained scimitar dropping from his feeble grasp, is descending to his prophetic tomb. Everywhere civil institutions are seeking to emancipate themselves from the fatuity of ecclesiastical control. It is folly for us, ladies and gentlemen, to pretend to bring our little calculations to bear within the sweeping cycles of inspired vision, but it is plain that we are on the eve of a strange and unprecedented struggle. We stand on

the shore of a troubled ocean. Forked lightnings disturb the sky, and booming thunders indicate the coming storm. The angry billows, as they rise in wild confusion, are already beginning to break upon the extended strand, while the oldest mariners are turning their prows to the nearest haven. The bark of human progress, however, gallantly tides the wave; and, with every sail set, and every pennon streaming, and liberty at the tiller, she is destined to ride till her hardy crew shall cast anchor in the broad and silvery bay of the world's final glory.

It would be impossible for us adequately to estimate the influence of Martin Luther upon the fate or destinies of the world. I know that it has become the fashion among some drawing-room, namby-pamby theologians to disparage Luther; he sits too heavily upon their weak stomachs; they cannot digest the man, and it would be a singular thing if they could, when Leo the Tenth, with an hereditary maw full of martyrs, found him too hard to swallow. Luther, they say, was "he who troubled Israel," and the disguising Ahabs and painted Jezebels of the day brought the same charge against Elijah. Luther was a vulgar brawler too, they say, and why? When his eye at length recognized in the papacy an Agag delicately walking, he hewed him in pieces before the Lord of Hosts. And Luther was superstitious, they say; and well he might be; things do wear their most eccentric and monstrous shapes in the dim, exaggerated carica-

tures of twilight, but when the sun arose upon Luther's soul, they gat them away to their dens as if pelted with the tiles of Wittenberg. All Luther's superstitions were due to his popish antecedents, his virtues to the pious heroism that rejected them. He unquestionably arises before us as a man of a high and burning purpose. Could tears have stood in his eyes, we almost imagine we might hear them hiss on the fire of an unconquerable determination. He can utter honeyed speech, apologies fit not his rugged utterance, and compliments are crushed between his granitic lips. He is indeed a courtier, but it is only in the palaces of heaven that he is known as such. His breast heaves as heaves the breast of one who has received tidings which must and shall be heard. His purpose bears him on. He is met in his earliest manhood by problems most painful and difficult of solution; problems which almost shattered his intellect, which almost broke his heart—but still his purpose bore him on. He was assailed at every step, menaced on every side, threatened with every evil, and looked in vain for many a friend—but still his purpose bore him on. "One thing I do." And he toiled, and labored, and prayed, and longed, and languished, and agonized for nothing less. He was denounced as a fanatic, branded as an outcast, arraigned as a criminal, condemned as a felon, excommunicated from the Church, and cursed from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot—but still his burning purpose bore him on. His purpose

took him captive—it fired his heart, sublimed his intellect, nerved his arm, grasped his conscience, and made him a right royal man—a man before whom priests, and vicars, and cardinals, and pope's conclaves, and hosts, and nations, became as “a rush against Othello's breast.” His purpose was that of a man; his perseverance was that of a saint; his achievement was that of a conqueror; his reward is that of the finally triumphant, and his name liveth as the treasure of the Church and the world for evermore! To use the language of a living orator, “He is the undying one, the mention of whose name rouses the ardor of the manly, and quickens the pulses of the free; whose spirit yet stirs, like a clarion, the great heart of Christendom; and whose very bones have so marvellous a virtue, that, like the bones of Elisha, if on them were stretched the corpse of an effete Protestantism, they would surely wake it into life to the honor and glory of God.

What more can we say, but that his “life reminds us we may make our lives sublime?” For “being dead he yet speaketh,” “even from his tomb his nature cries, even in his ashes lives his wonted fires.” He speaks to us, this dead Luther; speaks to us, speaks of the worth of self-sacrificing zeal, of the beauty of a highly sanctified intellect, of the grandeur of an all-absorbing purpose. He speaks to us, this dead Luther—speaks of unswerving fortitude, of unblenching courage, of invincible determination. He speaks to us, this

risen Luther, speaks from his throne of living light ; speaks, and that as distinctly as though his own articulate voice fell upon our ears ; speaks, encouraging us to battle, to vigor in fight, to immortal victory. Bids us go forward, come up, stand fast, forward again, higher yet, until with him we shout, the battle fought, with him, the victory won. Let his mantle fall on Christendom. As we say, Rest there ! Oh, rest thee, Martin Luther ! Thou hast built a monument which shall stand while the ruddy sun and the pale moon endure.

ASPIRE.

Aspire !

Yet do not crave
The wreath or grave
Won by ambitions's butchering slave ;
Not those who smite, but those who save,
True fame acquire !

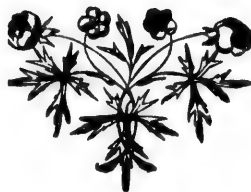
Aspire !

The mountain breast
Throned on whose crest,
Fair honor crowns her toil-worn guest ;
There is a realm of perfect rest
A little higher.

Aspire !

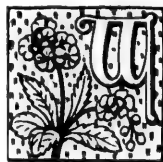
Christ goes before ;
Excelsior !
From height to height till life is o'er,
March, to the music angels pour
From every lyre !

Aspire !
Ambition halts
Mid sins and faults ;
But earnest truth proud wrong assaults,
And over every barrier vaults
To God, its Sire.





WOMAN ; HER POSITION · AND INFLUENCE.



WE know of no field of contemplation more replete with what is thrilling in interest and instructive in character than that which we designate creation. In this field we see the goings forth of a great and potent intellect, and the outworking of the highest and sublimest purposes. Infinite wisdom is seen alike in the plan and the execution of the details ; in the endlessly diversified components and the finished harmony of the stupendous whole. The deep glory of the pillared firmament, the dark heaving grandeur of the rolling ocean, the overwhelming magnificence of mountain and precipice, at once their Great Original proclaim. The roar of rushing waterfall, the dappled beauty of the verdant vale, the waving of the golden grain, and all the variegated glory of the hoary forest, tell us of a Triune God. While from the petals of every flower, the orbit of every star, and the undu-

lations of every breeze, the truth resounds: "The hand that made us is Divine." In the beginning, Jehovah, having silenced the wild war of nature's elements, having reduced to order the jarring principles of discord, having poured forth light from its secret fountains and sent the sun as a giant to run his race, having dressed inanimate nature in all the glowing hues of life and beauty, and peopled a thousand hills with the tribes of animated beings, He at length introduced Man—MAN. Not created as was inorganic or unintelligent natures, by a word or a volition, but solemnly deliberated on by the Eternal Godhead. Not dismissed into being by the mere declaration that it was "good," but emphatically calling forth from his Great Creator the seal of a perfecter approbation—"Behold, it is very good!" Thus God saw his works and pronounced them good. Thus light, as it darted and rippled, and ran through primal gloom profound, was good. Thus the earth, as it rose rock-ribbed and solidified at His behest, was good. Thus the ocean, as it heaved, and tossed, and danced within its appointed limits, was good. Thus the frozen circles, and the burning zone, and the intermediate regions of the green-robed earth, and all that is in them, were surveyed by the Great Architect, and all were pronounced good. In the midst, however, of all this Divine complacency, this rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, the Creator, in His wisdom, marked one deficit—one thing which was not good, viz.: "for

man to be alone." Alone, in a certain sense, he was not; for what are now the discordant elements of creation, were then so many chords of harmony, blending, augmenting, and diffusing the deep-rolling symphony of love. The wolf could dwell with the lamb; the leopard could lie down with the kid; the calf, the young lion, and the fatling together. Crouched at the feet of the first man He formed their nomenclature; he called them all by name. But above, around, east, west, there was found no helpmeet for him. With this one want, life was half solitude, and Eden a semi-desert. Endowed with a nature too communicative to be content with itself, he wants society, he asks a resting point, for he only half lives whilst he lives alone. Made to think, his thought seeks another thought by which to quicken and to vitalize itself. Made to speak, his speech is sorrowfully lost in the air, or only awakens an echo which can mutilate, but cannot reply. Made to love, his love knows not where to fix itself, and falling back upon itself, threatens to become a barren egotism. In short, all his being aspires to another self, but alas! this other self does not exist; there is found for Adam "no helpmeet." The most nervous and magnificent specimens of animal life around him are too far beneath him, and the Infinite Invisible was too far above him, for their condition ever to become his. It was at this juncture that God made woman, and the grand problem was solved. Thus, in anticipation of all canons, creeds, converts and courts

ecclesiastical, we have the Creator's estimate of celibacy ; and from the very threshold of human history there rises the yet unrepealed and indisputable dictum, "It is not good for man to be alone." Woman, then, was essential to the well-being of man; she was essential to the perfection of creation ; she was the crowning glory of the globe.

There is another point worthy of a moment's thought, and that is this, woman was not compounded out of the dust of the ground, after the fashion in which man had been created. It pleased the Creator to take the woman from the man, thereby showing him that she was, and must evermore be considered as, truly and essentially one with himself. Adam, recognizing this fact, said, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." Hence, to use the language of good Matthew Henry, "Woman was not taken out of man's head, to rule over him." (Although by close observation it would seem that some wives had been taken out of the heads of their husbands, and that the consequent vacuum had never afterwards been replenished). "Nor out of his feet, to be trampled on by him ; but from his side, to be equal with him ; from under his arm, to be protected by him ; from near his heart, to be his beloved." The name by which Adam designated his better half is likewise germinant. "She shall be called," says he, "Ishah," which is literally rendered female man. The Latin Vulgate renders the name "Virago," which, of course, is the feminine form of the

word "Vir," a man. By some carping critics, some old bachelor vampires, the word woman has been supposed to mean "woe man," assuming that woman and misery are synonymous terms. We, however, have no sympathy with such a crabbed, cynical and inexperienced a rendering as that. What were the views and feelings of the primeval pair, when first tendered to each other, can be more easily imagined than described. The blind prince of British Song has made Adam vent himself thus :

" I beheld her not far off

Such as I saw her in my dreams, adorned
With what all earth and heaven could bestow
To make her amiable : on she came
Led by her Heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice—(Then mark his boyish rapture).
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture, dignity and love.
I, overjoyed could not forbear aloud :—

Thou hast fulfilled

Thy words, Creator, bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair ! But fairest this
Of all Thy gifts ! Nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself,
Before me. Woman is her name, of man
Extracted ; for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere,
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul."

It were, indeed, delightful to linger among the scenes of love's earliest bliss, to follow the first pair

in their meanderings by the ancient river, and with them to bask in bowers of fragrant beauty. It were bliss, indeed, to breathe with them, the air, soft with the souls of flowers; to feast, with them, on nature's most luscious fruits; and to sink, with them, to rest amid adoring melodies. Surely enchantment reigns where love first made her home on earth. We imagine the birds singing in harmony to the pebbly brooks, the streams glistening in the sunlight, the cooing of the turtle doves mellowing the heart. We imagine the vine roaming, the date clustering, and the pomegranate hanging low; a million flowers breathe their treasured fragrance, and ten thousand odoriferous shrubs give forth their spices. The sun smites not by day, nor the moon by night. Beauty crowds upon the sight, the voice of melody charms the air, and perfume steers the breeze. The gentle winds dally, and the so zephyrs breathe through bowers where all is beauty, and innocence, and bliss. It, indeed, seems to us an immense pity that ever a scene so tranquil should become the theatre of gusty change; that ever skies so roseate and serene should bristle with storm and tempest, and be charged with the elements of vindictiveness and wrath; that ever hearts so loving, confiding and tender, should be washed, and gaoled, and broken by the heaving of a fetterless sorrow. But the story of woman's earliest seduction and

“ The fruit

Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,”

I need not here repeat, suffice it to say, that a change did come, and

“Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat
Sighing through all her work, gave signs of woe
That all was lost.”

From that period to the present moment, the history of woman has been the history of the world. I hesitate not to say that the most powerful influences known on earth, whether for good or evil, is in the hands of woman. The historian may demur, but history bears me out. In studying past ages, savage or civilized, in the East or in the West, pagan or Christian; in antiquity or in the Middle Ages; in the Middle Ages or in modern times, there is nothing which exhibits the character of a nation more fully than the condition of its women. In observing that which passes around us, we shall everywhere find that woman is in the world, in all its mightiest transformations, as the poet pictures Agrippina in the Senate, “Behind the scene invisible and present.” As it was by a woman that Satan first effected his dusky and malignant purpose, so we may generally trace to woman the calamities and the crimes which come down upon humanity—enmities, aversions, law suits, suicides, duels, murders and wars. But as it was by a woman that the Saviour came to redeem a world, so to woman we may as clearly trace those ideas and works which elevate, and control, and save the world. What tender

devotedness, what generous sacrifice, what holy inspirations, what pious institutions, what charitable foundations, are due to woman! She is, unquestionably, the maker of history. Her sphere may be comparatively narrow, but her achievements are as varied as they are decisive. She is mistress of her own realm, and within its limits she displays all those secret resources which I should pronounce admirable, did they not inspire me with a more profound sentiment towards her, and towards Him who has thus endowed her. That practical glance, correct as it is rapid. That survey, short as it is clear. That power of penetrating the heart, by I know not what subtle methods, to us unknown and impracticable. That vigilance, as exact as it is unperceived. Those numerous and complicated springs of domestic administration always under her control. That ever open access to appeals. That listening attention bestowed on every one. That freedom of thought and of action amid the severest troubles and embarrassments. That elasticity, or shall I call it, that unwearied weakness. That exquisite delicacy of feeling. That tact so skilful, if, indeed, it be not an instinct. That adroit skilfulness, by which she worketh willingly with her hands. That exquisite propriety, by which she can remove a malady, cheer a broken spirit, awaken a slumbering conscience, reopen a long-closed heart; indeed, everything she accomplishes, everything which makes her woman, tells upon the destinies of the world.

A great Roman seeing his little daughter amusing herself on the carpet in his room, said to a friend, "That child rules the world." "Ha! Hem! How so?" inquired the friend. "Why," said he, "that child rules her mother, her mother rules me, I rule Rome, and Rome rules the world." A woman's cares, by their very natures, seem subsidiary to those of man, and hence it is that some are apt to underrate the magnitude of domestic responsibilities.

But the more a man knows of human nature, of domestic influence, of sympathy for others, the more will he be convinced that the ruling, governing power is in woman's keeping. Silently, and without ostentation, she gently moulds the character of her times, and sends the potency of her sway deep down into after years. The lustre of her eye, the grace of her step, the tones of her voice; her winning endearments, her burning enthusiasm, her gentle charities, her patience under sufferings, her unflinching fortitude under danger—above all, the all but divine majesty of her love, conspire to make her great. "I have ever regarded," says an American orator, "that expression of David in his glorious and incomparable lamentation over Jonathan as somewhat hyperbolic; or the production of a free poetic license, 'This love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman.' There may be," says he, "in man for man, a strong and magnificent affinity, a grand unity of purpose, which shall strengthen two souls and make them equal

in power and influence to hundreds of the isolated and friendless representatives of our common nature, but can it be called love? It is, indeed, a brave passion; it combats the elements, it marches undisturbed and serene to the cannon's mouth, it triumphs in agonies and in the eye of despair. But is it love? Will it last? Last like woman's love, through disappointment, and poverty, and neglect, and scorn? Let woman's love be kindled towards God or towards man, and you have kindled a flame which shall outlive the stars and the ruddy sun. You have lighted an intensity of passion, which goes down deep to the roots of the everlasting hills: and, like the volcanic fires too, let its passage be opposed and its impulses obstructed, and it will lay waste the green fields and embowering groves of human happiness, leaving the bosom where it glowed and at length raged, a bare and blasted desolation." Leave man to himself, and he will banish regret in active labor, or perchance in festal mirth; but woman hides, hides to weep in solitude, to grieve in seclusion. Think for one moment of a soldier's home. The summons comes for him to haste into the bloody jaws of battle. A few sad tears, a few farewells, a lingering, another look; and then, amid the busy hum of camps, the clash of arms, and all the bustling activities of battle's stern array, the parting is forgotten. The cry of the babe is drowned in the clang of steel, and the sobs of the mother in the rattle of musketry. But just turn to the home deserted.

Look at the gentle wife, who holds aloft her little treasure that he may see his father go, whom she, too, would see but for her blinding tears. Tidings come, a battle's fought, victory's won; the town, the country, all, all are jubilant! But turn to the battle-field; the sun has set upon it, the dank dew falls on danker grass; the distant gun booms suddenly o'er the gory plain; the gasping steed lies champing with expiring agony; the nerveless hand of the nerveless rider rigidly clutches a rigid rein; the night wolf howls, and the vulture swoops to batten on blood. But what light is that you see glimmering through the awful gloom? What figure that that glides among the dead? A woman! See her as she falls upon her knees, and holds her flickering lamp to this and that cold face, to find the one she loves. See her bend downwards over yonder form—found at last; see how she wrings her hands in agony, how she puts back the matted locks from his manly but mangled brow; mark how intently she kisses his clay-cold lips, and how passionately she prays beside her soldier-corpse. She has found the shrine of her heart, and she is crystallizing its fallen beauty with her tears. She loves as a woman loves. The mighty "Wizard of the North," Sir Walter Scott, says and sings:

"Woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
When pain and anguish wring the brow
A ministering angel thou."

Her tenderness, softness, gentleness, kindness, benevolence, disinterestedness, and love, all proclaim her, in hours of pain, a friend and a comforter. It has been beautifully said, "In sickness there is no hand like a woman's hand, no heart like a woman's heart"—and who will not corroborate this? A man's breast may swell with unquestionable sorrow, and apprehension may weigh his heart; yet place him by the side of the sick couch, in the shadow rather than the light of the sad lamp that watches it; let him have to count over the long dreary hours of night, and wait, alone and sleepless, the struggle of the gray dawn into the chamber of suffering; let him be appointed to this ministry for the brother of his heart, or the father of his being, and his grosser nature, even where it is most perfect, will tire. But see a mother, a sister, a wife, a woman in his place! She evinces no weariness, nor owns recollection of herself. Her ear, acquiring a sort of blind man's instinct, catches the slightest stir, or whisper, or breath. Her steps are in harmony with the genius of silence; her accents are soft as an echo, and, oblivious of self, her sex alone predominates. "Man's love," says Byron, "is of man's life a thing apart, 'tis woman's whole existence." Love in man is less spontaneous, less disinterested, perhaps, more selfish than love in woman. Less interested, because man loves woman more for his own sake than for her's; woman loves man less for her own sake than for his. Man loves the woman whom God has given, because he

cannot rest satisfied with himself; woman loves man, because it is the necessity of her being to love the one whom God has given. If solitude weighs heavily on man, it is because life has no charm apart from the helpmeet like unto him; but when woman finds life a solitude, it is because she finds life without a sufficient aim, when she has no one to whom she can minister. Instance Margaret Fuller, who, with all her intellectual attainments, her immense mental resources, her brilliant and artistic friendships, the varied and almost limitless treasures of mental gratification. She alone might call her own, still sighs and almost sobs, for a shrine at which she may, with propriety, lay her womanly heart. It is, perhaps on this account that the Scriptures, which repeatedly exhort the husband to love his wife, never once enjoins upon the wife (whatever they say about obey) to love her husband, as though they reckoned upon her very nature as precluding all necessity for such an exhortation. And then how faithful generally is woman in the sphere of her real friendships! It has been remarked that although we have several instances on record in the New Testament of man's deserting the Saviour during His life and also after His death, not one instance of the kind is narrated of a solitary woman. Her tender hand cherished His infancy, and through all His subsequent course she followed His steps. She hung upon his lips, she called His blessing upon her children, she touched His garments with a holy

faith, she anointed His head with ointment and bathed His feet with her tears, she wept when He was betrayed, and trembled at His condemnation, she followed Him to Calvary and clung to the cross on which He died, and even death quenched not her solicitude for Him, for anxiously, lovingly, piningly she lingered by the rifled tomb, saying, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Woman's love, in its intensity, its constancy, its self-sacrificing ardor, is unquestionably the sweetest flower that ever bloomed in the desert soil of a fallen world. It is twice blessed, it blesseth her that gives and him that takes. Its fragrance falleth on the heart like the balmy odors of paradise, and the fainting revive. The house of mourning becomes a theatre of comparative gladness, and the blackness of darkness is not quite black when it blandly beams. It can soothe the keenest sorrow, set an iris in the darkest cloud, and irradiate the wide realms of human woe. It alters not with circumstantial alternation. Let the day be long or short, rough or smooth, dark or light, stormy or calm, the true love of a true woman stands forth, the same delicate, lovely, odoriferous, unfading plant of renown. As the "rare old ivy," creeping where no life is seen, spread its arms to embrace the falling tower, and holds it up in its hoary fragmentary grandeur through following years; so woman's love, stealing into the desolated aisles and chambers of a broken spirit, throws its circling influence around the whole that

remains from "ruin's havoc," and holds the shattered heart still fast to life.

We come now to speak of the intellectual status of woman. And may we not say that it is a fact which is daily receiving a wider recognition, viz., that intellect is of no sex. Men for ages have done their utmost to belittle and minify the intellectual achievements of women; those achievements, however, begin now to be regarded as valid, and brother and sister alike, on the basis of individual merit, are admitted to the temple of fame. It seems to us that the intellect of woman bears the same relation to that of man as her physical organization; it is inferior in power, and different in kind. That certain women have surpassed certain men in bodily strength and intellectual energy does not contradict the general principles founded in nature. The essential and invariable distinction appears to me to be this: In man the intellectual faculties exist more self-poised and self-directed; more independent of the rest of the character than we ever find them in women, with whom talent, however predominant, is, in a much greater degree, modified by the sympathies and moral character. We have examples of female genius at a very early period of authentic history. We have Miriam striking "the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea;" and Deborah delivering Israel from ruin, and chanting her victorious ode till a thrill of startled admiration vibrates through all hearts. We have Aspasia instructing Pericles in the

divine art of oratory, and bewitching even Socrates by the irresistible spell of the conversation. We have Cleopatra, Egypt's lovely queen, giving an audience to the ambassadors of ten different nations, each in his native tongue. We have, again, Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen of England, the mighty foundress of British religious liberty. Then we might speak of Maria Theresa, the pride of Austria, the vigorous politician, the sagacious ruler, and the successful teacher of her own sixteen children. Of the mighty Katherine, the romantic woman, the imperial lawgiver, and the supreme genius of Russia. Of Madame De Staël, and Madame Roland, the vehement and fiery daughters of the French Revolution. For these all were vigorous, energetic, intellectual women, and each has left her impress upon the face of the world's history. But it is more especially within the past two hundred years, and less, that the general force and worth of woman's character, the decision of woman's purpose, the enthusiasm of woman's temperament, the buoyancy of woman's spirit, and the keen penetration of woman's mental powers have been more fully developed, admired and applauded, than ever before. Her ancient degradation has gradually disappeared at the approach of Christianity; and her progress has daily discovered the possession of talents to which the world was previously a stranger. In the physical sciences, we might mention a Mary Somerville; among historians a Mrs. Green; among sculptors, a Miss Hosmer; in *belles-*

lettres, an Eliza Cook, a Miss Edgeworth, and a Mrs. Stowe; among painters, a Rosa Bonheur; among poets, a Mrs. Hemans, a Mrs. Browning, and a Mrs. Sigourney; among philanthropists, a Florence Nightingale; among mothers, pre-eminently, Mary Washington; and among queens, the queenliest of them all England's Victoria.

As I have already intimated, the elevation of woman to the proud position she occupies at this moment is, at least primarily, due to the beneficent genius of Christianity. The position of woman antecedently to the introduction of the Christian religion differed widely from what we see it now is. Neither the religion nor the laws of the most polished eras of Greece and Rome exercised a favorable influence on domestic or social manners. While the seductive charms of the talented but abandoned Aspasia, Lasthenia, and Axisthia were embellished with all the fascinations of wit and eloquence, and received the homage of Pericles, Socrates, and Plato, the Grecian matron was consigned to ignorance and to contempt. The enduring fidelity of Penelope, and the tender affection of Andromache, so far from calling forth the responsive smile of conjugal confidence, only elicited the authoritative command to retire into seclusion and assume the distaff.

The ancient Egyptians were exceedingly jealous of their wives; and having decreed it to be indecent for women to appear abroad without shoes, they deprived

them of the means of wearing them, by threatening with the penalty of death any one who should make shoes for them. By the law of Athens, slaves, women, and lunatics were comprehended under one class, which was pronounced to be subject to various legal disabilities. According to Roman jurisprudence no one could make a woman his heir, nor could she acquire property, except for the benefit of her husband. The whole burden of domestic economy was imposed upon the wife, unaccompanied by the slightest proof of trust or confidence. Solon enacted that no wife should leave home on a visit with more than three garments, the size of her basket was to be restrained to a cubit in length, and her provisions to the value of an obulus. Cicero dismissed his wife Terentia, after a union of thirty years, on the discovery that she was peevish and somewhat expensive. Metalla, the wife of Sylla, was divorced on an equally frivolous plea. Marcus Brutus, Dolabella, the younger Cato, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, Augustus, and many others, were equally wanton and cruel.

The position of women in ancient times, as also in many of the barbarous nations of the earth to-day, stands out in most ominous and painful contrast to the position they occupy in enlightened and Christianized communities. We shudder at the indignities to which they were subjected in the very palmy days of other dispensations. Even in the days when philosophy triumphed, and eloquence fulminated over Greece

to Artaxerxes' throne; in the days of Pericles, and still more in a subsequent age, prostitution linked with superstition, and sanctioned by the oracular solemnities of a most specious system of religion, produced the most deplorable effects upon public morality. The dark waters of pollution rolled over the cultivated scene, depositing their slimy sediment upon the glittering face of society, marring its beauty, despoiling its loveliness, and tarnishing its glory forever. In Sparta, the home of the hero and the cavalier, woman was most shamefully exposed, and the public gymnasium rung with the echo of her nameless abominations. In Rome, matters differed only in seeming. The most restrictive and oppressive treatment characterized the bearing of the haughty Roman towards the gentler sex. And so completely had this treatment wrought its results, that the Roman women, forgetting the natural modesty of their sex, would frequently take part in the gladiatorial shows of the arena; and under Nero and Domitian, even ladies of rank vied with each other for the palm of the encounter. They unsexed themselves, and sank to the very lowest moral depths. Indeed, it seems hard to conceive, that scenes where philosophy presided, and where freedom dwelt; where art was nourished from childhood till it became a giant; where the pencil and the chisel seemed alike guided by inspiration, and reared monuments of their taste and skill, perhaps never to be equalled; where the poet sang, and Demosthenes thundered, where the

eagle of victory always hovered ; where heroism was common character and mighty achievement was matter of history—I say it seems incredible that such scenes should be but the dens of lewdness and debasement, and yet such in fact were Greece and Rome. And if we turn our attention to nations yet unenlightened by the rising splendors of Christianity, we find the grossest abominations still sanctioned. In Russia, the condition of woman painfully illustrates the far down degradation of man. Among the Siberians especially, she is the subject of contumely, denounced as impure, and odious to the gods. Conjugal fidelity is very frequently bartered for gain, or sacrificed at the shrine of a most pernicious hospitality. In Turkey, the degradation of woman is almost absolute, and many find a life home only in the accursed seraglio for life. In Italy and Spain, licentiousness prevails to an almost unlimited extent, and especially in the Basque Provinces do we find the condition of woman all but intolerable. Leaving Europe and passing over the Asiatic continent, matters improve none. In China, weakness, jealousy, a small foot, and a wrong head, are national characteristics. In passing to Hindostan, we are forcibly reminded of the muddy river and the funeral pile, and the altogether animalized category in which woman finds her lot. In Africa, 'mid citron bowers, and groves of palm and flowery glens of Eden bloom—where “Every prospect pleases and only man is vile,”—a strange fate is that of woman.

To use the language of a certain writer, "The people of Tunis fatten their young ladies for marriage. A girl, after she is betrothed, is cooped up in a small room, shackles of silver or gold are put upon her ankles and wrists, as a piece of dress. She is then fed until they are filled to the proper thickness. But in many cases she literally dies under the spoon." And thus it is wherever are wanting the true elements of civilization and Christianity. I use the word Christianity advisedly, for a high state of civilization may exist where the true rights and proper immunities of women are all but ignored. Only to cite one example, take the philosophic Kant, whom no contemporary philosopher surpassed in the depth and power of his moral suasion, and we find that he assigns to man, in one part of his writings, the noble virtues, and only leaves to woman the pleasing virtues; by which he understands, virtues agreeable, unrestrained and rambling. Take his own words: "Do not speak to woman," says he, "of duty or of obligation. Do not expect from her sacrifices or generous victories over herself. You propose, for example, to give up part of your fortune to save a friend; then beware of saying a word to your wife on the subject. How restrain her lively tongue, or charge her bosom with a secret too weighty for her." What do you think, ladies, of such a deliverance from such a world-famous philosopher? One is led to ask whether Kant's idea of woman is less humiliating than the forlorn and

abject position which paganism assigns to her ; and to answer a speech so hard and so opprobrious, we have only to ask man what he owes to woman, what he owes to himself, and what he owes to Him who made her such ? We have to say then, that woman is indebted, not so much to what the world calls civilization, or refinement, or philosophy, or a lofty education ; but to the bland, far-darting, all-pervading, ever-elevating genius of Christianity, for the position she enjoys in this and other Christian countries. Christianity found women everywhere with their faces wanting the angel, and the *imprimatur* of ruin on their brow. But Christianity finding woman thus fallen, and broken, and dismantled, and dilapidated, embraced her ; wiped the brand of ruin from her brow ; filled her heart with tenderness, her eye with joy, her mouth with song ; and placed her by the side of man, to become his companion, in sorrow and in joy, in sickness and in health, in life and in death, in time and in eternity. The two greatest and most potential nations of the earth are those where the honor and the rights of woman are the most sacredly and solicitously guarded ; and those nations are especially the theatres of the highest and most unwearied Christian activities. I refer to Britain and America. And may I not say that this deferential regard for the sanctity of woman's character is coextensive with British and American literature, yea, coextensive with the very spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race ? And I will venture to say, that

this spirit is destined to survive the outward and material forms of greatness with which it is now associated, as certainly as the immortal mind is destined to survive the marble or the granite which commemorates its achievements. London may realize Macaulay's prediction; and fishermen may spread their nets in the mighty marts of British and American commerce, but this spirit shall never die. The mighty Anglo-Saxon brotherhood is a unit; and in the integrity and richness of one common language, in the spread and vigor of one Protestant faith, in the treasures which the same past has given them alike to cherish, in an undivided possession of the mighty present, in all the glory which kindles on the horizon of their common future, and in the absolute homogeneity of their common Christianity, I, at least, see the inexorable, Why? Britain and America should continue to live in peace and amity with each other. As a great Anglo-Saxon, Christian brotherhood, whose literature is one; as the two great Christian nations of the world, whose mission it is to elevate the down-trodden in every land; as Britons and Americans, divided, yet one, distinct, yet blending—thus may abide,

“Till earth's remotest nation
Hath learnt Messiah's name.”

Let not a venial and subsidized press, let not a mouth-ing and ranting oratory—yea, “whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.”

I come now to notice specially the influences of woman. I have already stated that woman is in the world as the poet pictures Agrippina in the Senate; but I think, perhaps, few are aware of woman's power for good or evil; sure I am that women themselves are not aware of what they might do to civilize, to elevate, and to Christianize the world. Their influence is all the more powerful, because quiet, gentle, and oftentimes hidden; it is not the noisy and the exciting elements of nature that are the most powerful. The lightning's flash, that rends the rocks and rifts the mountain oak, and whose bursting gives us the grand, roaring peal of thunder, is not the mightiest influence in the world. No; the sun, whose gentle rays falling on a wintry world, wakes it up to all the beauties of spring, makes the buds to open, the sap to rise from the roots, and extend to the farthest branch of our tallest trees, is more powerful than the lightning. The oxygen that attacks the most substantial building, and at last lays the proudest castle in the dust, works quietly and noiselessly; but it is more powerful than the lightning, the earthquake, or the ocean in a storm; and so woman's influence, quiet, unobtrusive, often silent and hidden, is one of the mightiest agencies in the world for the advancement of truth and the progress of the race. But that influence which is thus so potent when made to irrigate, to fertilize, and to bless the waste places of our common humanity, is a bane, a blast, a mildew and a very death, when turned

from the ways of righteousness. Solomon, whose full and varied experiences in the premises might well make him an oracle, has given us a faint idea of the bearing of woman's influence when turned awry. He says the thoughtless woman "plucks down her house with her hands;" the angry woman has a presence more to be dreaded than "dwelling in the corner of a house-top or in the desert;" the corrupted woman, "is as rottenness in the bones of her husband," the marriage of the odious woman is one of the four things "which trouble the earth;" the beauty of the beautiful woman who is devoid of wisdom is as "a jewel of gold in a swine's snout," and a quarrelsome woman is like "a continual dropping in a very rainy day." And by reference to the many and painful facts brought boldly out by sacred narrative, we shall find that woman's influence when turned towards the chamber of death is awfully conclusive. The narrative tells us that it was by Eve that sin entered the world; that it was by Adah and Zillah that Lamech, the first polygamist, became also the first blasphemer; that by the daughters of men seducing the sons of God was the corruption of the earth and the deluge; that by Hagar, the peace, and love, and faith of Abraham were for a while disturbed; that by the woman of the house of Laban, the fidelity of Jacob was for a long time overshadowed; that through Judith and Bashemath was caused the profane indifference of Esau; that through his adulterous wife,

Potiphar became an incarnation of injustice; that by the daughters of Moab the most terrible plague fell upon Israel, and that by the daughters of Canaan Israel became a coward after conquest. The narrative also tells us of Delilah's witchery upon the burly and somniferous Samson, and his consequent shameless degradation; again, that by the companion of the Levite of Ephraim, nearly a whole tribe was exterminated; that by Bathsheba David ceased to be David; that by strange women Solomon the wise became an awful fool; that by Jezebel the impious Ahab became a perjurer and a murderer; that by Athaliah, the kings of Judah followed in the train of the kings of Israel; that by Herodias, Herod beheaded John the Baptist in spite of himself; and that by the prophetic woman of the Apocalypse is shadowed the apostacy of the whole earth. Such are some of the facts recorded in sacred narrative, and sure it is not necessary that we exhume the buried facts of more secular chronicles. Suffice it to say, that woman's influence for evil, when she bends her hidden soul to its consummation, neither knows measure nor end. It is truly said, "That woman lost one paradise—but she often makes another wherever she goes." But it is equally true, and is in itself a much more cheering fact, that woman's influence, when directed by the spirit of truth and righteousness, is the mightiest agency in the world's final amelioration.

If we turn our attention to the home sphere of

woman's influence, what power it wields there! "A virtuous wife is the crown of her husband." In his home, with such a presiding genius, the husband finds, after the toils of the outward world, which have chafed and excoriated his heart, which have wounded and crushed his spirit, an asylum, a loved rest, and a healing atmosphere. The smiles which cheer and decorate his home, remove his sense of friction and fatigues, mitigate the crowding troubles of his soul, calm the tempest of his agitated mind, and restore to his spirits their normal and wonted elasticity. Let a husband find in his home all that can render him happy within, with all that can render him useful without, so that in passing the threshold of his door to re-enter upon the bustling activities of life, he shall still linger to bless, and the world will be beggared in an attempt to produce a counterpart of truer rest than such a home affords. Thither he hastens to return, there he finds balm, solacement, and repose; there also he fits a linked armor to his soul, and from thence he goes forth to do a vigorous and masterful battle with the thousand conflicting forces of the world. What man is there among us who acknowledges not the worth, the priceless value, of a true-hearted, chivalrous, undoubting, ever-hopeful wife, in a peaceful and essential home. Many a man amid the hum and whirl of contending, ever-warring interests, had toppled from the pivot of honor and integrity, but for the bland, soothing, all-enzoning influences of a true wife,

in the heart's sanctuary—home. Oh! it were long to tell to what extent the earth, and may I not couple heaven, is indebted to the potential, unostentatious, unobtrusive, silent, ever-working, and ever-blessed influence of the world's best women. Among all the names uttered on earth as belonging to it, twine around them whatsoever witchery you please, let them be uttered by whatsoever voice you list; let poetry link them to its sweetest strains, and eloquence to its most burning periods; let them be set forth by the magic of art, and lifted on high by the swell of the most thrilling music; let all that art can do, be done, to make them great—and yet, I am bold to say, that, the world over, the dearest, tenderest, softest, most talismanic and most cherished, is the name of MOTHER! What is home without a mother? We never weary of thinking of our mothers—their watchful care, their tender vigils, their holy charity, their forgiving goodness, their matchless and truly marvellous love. What a great and hallowed fountain is a mother's love! We all turn to it as the heart's one, tried, and certain resting place. We love to recall our mothers, to think of the dear maternal smile, and of all that made the bliss of days gone by. How they loved us; how they did, and sacrificed, and suffered, all for us. We cannot forget how they forgave our follies, how they believed in us, how they lodged their very being in ours. "It is a general rule to which I have seldom seen an excep-

tion," says Michelet, "that superior men are all the sons of their mother." Behold that man of stout heart, and strong voice, whose indomitable courage can brave alike the anger of the prince, or the passions of the mob, and whose energy can make the very fates yield. In his childhood that man was weak, irresolute, vacillating; one in whom none had hope, save one; of whom all despaired, save one. She never despaired, never doubted, hoped on, hoped ever; and by working, and perseverance, and regulation, and contradiction, and a mother's love, revealed him to society—a man at last. And he in turn, as he lies a-dying, still to his mother turning, and the last name which he utters with his lips, even in his final wanderings of mind, is the very, very same he struggled, fifty years ago, to lisp the first. Who can hear the name of St. Augustine, without thinking of the tender, the patient, the humble Monica? And know ye that Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen, and many others, the flower of the Church, all had their Monicas. I have somewhere read, that in a ministerial conference, in which were gathered together a hundred and twenty American pastors, united in one common faith, each one was invited to make known the human instrumentality to which, under God, he attributed his blessed change, and out of the one hundred and twenty, over one hundred declared in favor of their mothers. All the resplendent glory of the moral universe, bow low and reverent before a mother's love. Not even

in angel hearts, beats there a truer, deeper, richer feeling than a mother's o'er her babe. The mother is the grand solar centre of all we may with truth call "home." And certainly, not till the light of eternity shall irradiate the darkness of time; not till the problems of human history shall all be solved; not till, with truer vision we are enabled to single out the various links between causation and effect, shall we be fully aware how far mothers have wrought the facts of the world's destiny. That you may more fully comprehend our position, we single out of the many millions but two, only two. We will first take the mother of the noble poet, Lord Byron. Lady Byron had all of a mother's heart, she loved George, with a most maternal love; marked the buddings of his mighty genius with a fond and gloating satisfaction. But she was herself wayward, erratic, vehement, passionate. She wanted judgment, discretion, equanimity; the whole woman seemed to be out of adjustment, wanting in general moral equipoise. She would by fits caress, and by fits denounce; when he was in fault she pardoned him, when he was not she would hurl a stool at his head; one moment she would correct him with a poker, and the next hug him with the grip of a tropical bear. The home climate of young Byron was all Arctic and Antarctic, he found no temperate zone. He was spoilt as a child, he grew up, spoilt still; and with a genius that held the world agape, he still went on, spoilt and spoiling; he knew no medium—could not govern him-

self—and died at last, still spoilt to the very core. But he who would assail him in his grave, oh! let him pause, for who among us all, with such a nature, and such a mother, had not sinned as much and more! But come from transatlantic homes, to a home, with which we are more familiar; and may I not say that history paints no fairer home than that in which the great, the good, the generous, the immortal Washington learnt to love his mother. And, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to ask; how far, and to what extent, the mother of Washington has influenced the minds and controlled the destiny of the Republic. Was it not due to home influence; that stern and abiding adhesion to right; that unswerving, unblenching, majestic fortitude in danger; that devotion to country, that places Washington at the very head of patriotism; that kindly, manly consideration of a worsted foe? In short, I hold that George Washington's valour, patriotism, generosity, moderation, conquest, and deathless renown, are primarily due to Mary, his mother. She taught him how to live, how to act, how to rule his own spirit, how to endure and faint not, how to conquer and how to die. And the bald, unglittering, unsophisticated, long-enduring monument on Bunker's Hill, yea, when the circling centuries shall have rushed around it, will still, will ever stand, as much to the honor of the mother, as the Father, of the great American Republic,

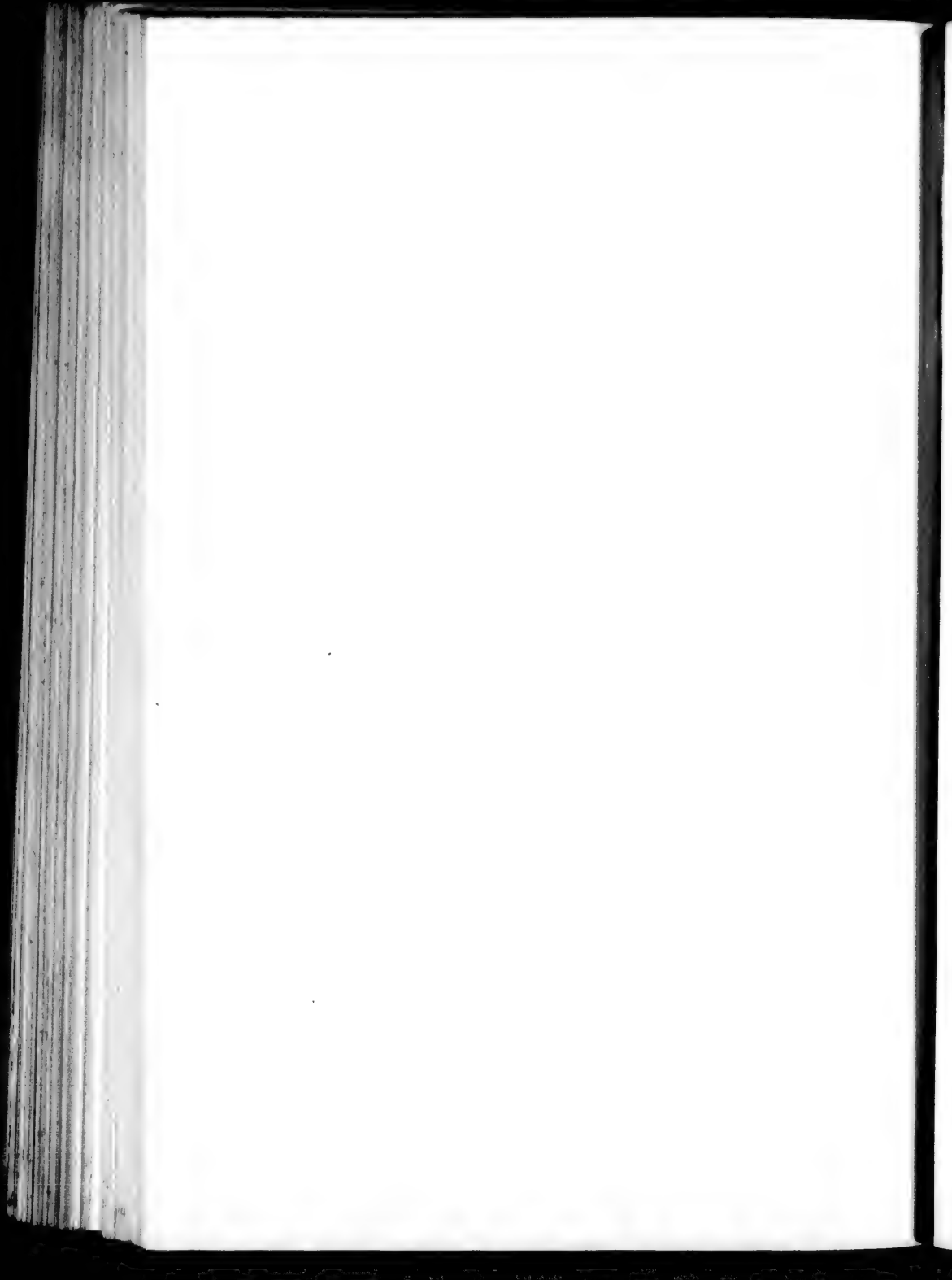
“A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive.”

A mother is emphatically the controller of destinies and indirectly the wielder of the fortunes of empires. Napoleon the First said one day to Madame Campan: "The old systems of instruction are worth nothing. What is wanting, in your ladyship's opinion, that the youth of France be well educated?" "Mothers," replied Madame Campan. This reply especially arrested the attention of the Emperor. "Here," said he, "is a system of education in one word. Be it your care to train up mothers who shall know how to educate their children." A lady of rank was once asked what sort of a husband she would wish her daughter to have; she replied, "I am more concerned that my daughter shall make a good wife, than find a good husband." The influence of mothers and wives on the extension of national power, on the upbuilding of a nation's status, on rendering a nation invincible and invulnerable, is altogether beyond measurement and compute. The heroes the statesmen, the poets, the philosophers, the ecclesiastics, the very rulers of the world of fifty years hence, are in their cradles to-day; and in nine cases out of ten, each will be what his mother makes him. In a free country, where every honorable walk is open, where the avenues to excellence and power have flung wide their portals, where honor and fame from no conditions rise, and where all are summoned to ascend, who can tell the extent and power of a well-directed home influence? To the mothers of the day are entrusted the hard-earned treasures of the past, to them

are committed the responsibilities of the present, and upon them rest down the obligations of the opening future. Wives, mothers, learn your power! Wives, mothers, feel your responsibility! Go forward, labor on, despair not. With your eye on the future, your soul one with God, your heart on your boy, you may yet revolutionize the world. Once for all, let every woman be true to herself, true to her country, true to her God, and time will hallow her name, strengthen her influence, and sanctify her memory.

“Sister! rest, but not for thee,
Spreads the world her downy pillow;
On the rock thy couch must be,
While around thee chafes the billow.
Thine must be a watchful sleep.
Wearier than another's waking;
For the charge that thou dost keep,
Brooks no moment of forsaking.”







CURIOSITY AND CURIOUS PEOPLE.



CURIOSITY has been defined, "scrupulous regard; carefulness," hence Shakespeare says, "They mocked thee for too much curiosity." Curiosity is again said to mean "nicety," "exactness;" "accuracy." Again, anxiety to know or learn; eager desire for information; disposition to scrutinize; inclination to inquiry; inquisitiveness. Yet further, as something curious, or that which excites interest; an interesting spectacle; a rarity. A curious man, is represented as one careful; anxious. As one exact; and nice; and subtile. As one having curiosity; as one anxious to know; desirous of information; inquisitive; scrutinizing. And finally, as one singular; strange; unusual; rare. Now, within the scope of definition, thus varied and embraceive, it will appear to many as no very difficult matter for almost any man to interest an audience for an hour. And yet, I am free to confess, that the breadth and generalization of the import of my subject, are precisely

what stagger and confound me. Of course, addressing as I do, the members of an important literary organization, it will be expected that whatever may be said about human anomalies, individual eccentricities, social oddities, and the smaller curiosities of life, the higher branches will receive due consideration. Curiosity, in its lower moods, lesser exercises, and abnormal life, is an unworthy and execrable prying, a fool rushing in where angels fear to tread. In its more normal and less impertinent queries, it is indicative of mental and moral equipoise and equilibrium. In its highest teachings and purest aspirations, it is thought regnant, authoritative, imperial and absolute. In itself, it is distinctive of sentient existence, and belongs only to intelligent beings. The objects by which we are over-canopied or surrounded, whether organized or inorganic, animate or inanimate, possess not, howsoever curious in themselves, this power of curiosity or inquisitiveness. To man alone, within these spheres (of course, I include woman) is given the power of inquiry and investigation. And hence his superiority in the scale of being. There may be much of organism, and proportion, and symmetry, and beauty; but the power of being curious there is not, in aught simply material. For instance, the earth under its teeming tribes, its manifold productions, its diversified scenery—the earth, with its Alpine wildernesses, its rushing waterfalls, its labyrinthine forests, and its pinnacles of everlasting snow, presents a wondrous

diadem of beauty, but it revolves on its axis, unasking and undesirous. The deep and dark blue ocean rolls boundless, endless and sublime, but asks no question. The mountain stands forth, hoary with the rime of Eld, but solitary in its gaunt magnificence, it imposes no query. The valley opens its luxuriant heart, and a million phases of fertility are crowded within its depths, but all unheeding it gives, but asks nothing. August and imposing as are the inlaid agates of the firmament, they know not joy, nor sorrow, hope nor fear, nor ever evolved a thought; pulseless, passionless, lifeless—they gleam a radiant deadness, an unconscious mass, a gorgeous clod.

Man is invested with this ability to inquire, this power to investigate, this curious and interrogatory gift, and hence all things are put under him. I would not say that there are not higher beings—beings of loftier powers, of a more capacious grasp of intellect—I would not attempt to span the bridgeless chasm that yawns between the sentient tenants of this planet, and the highest order, and hierarchies of intelligent beings; I would not say that a deeper and more darting curiosity does not characterize the unembodied princes of intellect, the undebilitated “sons of the morning,” who find things into which they desire to look. But I am bold to say that this power to think, and to reason, and to analyze; this dowry of the curious, is just that which elevates and gives distinctiveness to man. In sensation he is not on a

higher platform than the brute, but in this power of curiosity we find the link which holds him to the highest intelligences. And this same distinguishing power, unlike any other with which we are familiar, is capable of continual expansion ; ranges through all space, and stretches beyond all limited duration. It borrows splendor from all that is fair, subordinates whatever is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe. Curiosity has brought its trophies from afar, and its gratification from the ends of the wide world. Unabashed it has confronted the deep, the vast, the awful, the sublime. It has scanned the ocean's depths, pursued the flying storm, summoned the lightning to an audience, and swept supernal on the wings of mighty winds. It has lifted its voice in the densest forests ; and the most arid Saharas have echoed its appeal. The snow-belted mountains of the north, and the sunlit plains of the south, have alike reverberated to its call. It has made the east give up, and the west yield its secrets. With hardy hand it has broken into the encaverned rocks, and wrenched from them the secret of their being. It has taken count of the midnight orbs ; weighed their density, measured their bulk, and ascertained their velocity. It has mapped out the lunar fields, and gone a-rapping and a-tapping at the gates of the burning sun. Curiosity has disentombed the heroes of the past, and compelled them, hideous or otherwise, to revisit the glimpses of the moon. At its bidding, time disen-

chants herself, and her most witching and poetic treasures are surrendered. The halo of mystery which once o'erhung a thousand hills, and groves, and caverns, has melted away at its touch. The fabled sphinx is no more an enigma. The "thrice battered god of Palestine" has, at its beck, forsaken its buried tomb in Sennacherib's buried palace. Scylla and Charybdis have no terrors now. The cave of Trophonius, and the fountain of Ammon; Styx and Acheron; Delphic groves, and Theban graves, wizard the fancy no more. Curiosity has vulgarized the most mystic precincts, and held its picnics in the Valley of Jehosaphat and the sepulchre of St. James. It has thrown a new complexion over almost every department of nature, and a new interest into almost every walk of life. As we have already observed touching curiosity itself, in its highest efforts, it is thought regnant and absolute. And we may still further remark, that to produce a complete history of any one thought would baffle the most elaborate efforts of the most exalted. Who, for instance, can estimate the influence of the thought of Utility, which has so mightily changed the face of nature, and originated the ten thousand beneficent arts? Or the thought of Beauty, as developed in painting, sculpture, music and poetry: Or the thought of Truth, as unfolded in science, philosophy, and religion? Or the thought of God, as indicated universally in worship and other religious phenomena? Is there a finite

spirit in these spheres, or in the realms above us, qualified to produce a complete history of the achievements of any one of these mental heroes? Who then shall give a history of conquests made by thought, no less in number than the sands, and no less in might than the invincible army of the living God? But this curious power, this power to think, and to reason, and to act, is, in itself, marked by a singular restlessness and elasticity. There is not an interval in the ever wakeful day, when it suspends its activity and yields itself to rest. Thought succeeds thought; question rises upon question; desire deepens into languishing, and this in a ceaseless and endless round. Standing on the frontiers of existence, it is ever seeking to fathom the unfathomed, to explore the unexplored, and to decipher the hieroglyphics so strangely inscribed on its destiny. Unabashed, unhungering, unfatigued, it struggles on and struggles ever; aspiring and still aspiring to be more than it has been, stronger than it is. This tenacity of action, this earnest battle with inertness and oblivion, this absolute horror of sinking into nought, is at once peculiar and characteristic.

We have also remarked that this power of the curious in man is marked by a marvellous elasticity or expansiveness. It may, at times, be sorely tested and taxed, it may even at times, seemingly give out in presence of the very giants its own wand has summoned from the vasty deeps of darkness and mystery. But contact enlarges it, emboldens it, gives it a mightier

craving, and into the yet deeper darkness it makes its way, with a sort of horse-leech cry, "Give, give." It is its prerogative to expand and receive, to receive and expand without end. Had Homer, the blind prince of Grecian song, been living from the time in which he upreared the massive thoughts of the "Iliad," he had traversed the mazes of many a mightier "Ilium," and his masterpiece would be yet to come. Or Dantè, the masterly Florentine, had he swept the centuries, he would have explored other than his "seven" mystic "circles," he would have felt the fascination of many a fairer Beatrice, and his mightiest accomplishments would have been nothing more than the vestibule of a higher fame. Or Milton, who rode sublime upon the seraph-wings of ecstasy, and erst did pass the bounds of flaming space, where angels tremble while they gaze, had he still lived, were he still here, who shall tell with what piled-up power, and far-resounding eloquence, he would now eternal providences unfold, and justify the ways of God to man? This power of curiosity faints not, neither is weary, there is no searching of its strength. At one moment it soars through the heights of heaven, at the next, it wantons with the crests of ocean. Now it plucks a daisy, and anon it rends the mountain oak. It is alike familiar with magnitude and minuteness. It hurls the rock from its base, and lays open the components of a grain of sand. It unscales and unrinds the leviathan, anatomizes a butterfly, and actually

dissects a flea. "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." "Dragons, and all deeps; fire and hail; snow and vapor, and stormy winds; mountains and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars; kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges; both young men and maidens; old men and children"—all, all acknowledge its power, and by it are made, more or less, to realize the purpose of their being. And to all this it is equal; and the more this power accomplishes, and the more, as a power, it enlarges, and expands, and goes out; its rest is in activity, and it is only gratified a moment, ere it sigh, and seeks for more.

But we now come to note two or three especial facts, as connected more immediately with our present aim. And in so doing, we observe that curiosity, in its higher, better, and inquiring sense—in the sense of "desire for information," "thirst for the acquisition of knowledge," it implies fixedness of purpose, a determination to know. And what is man without will, and edge, and purpose? At best, an unrewarded, unrequited suitor. Wonder not that nature, science, literature refuse to give, when man is either too indifferent or too indolent earnestly to ask. Steadiness of purpose, decision of character, a sincere curiosity, a lofty determinateness to conquer, commend themselves to our admiration wheresoever found. But when the cause, in which the tensioned energies of

being are conscientiously employed, is, in itself, true and noble, the worker and the work, rising together into a moral grandeur, takes our hearts by storm. The undecided, see-saw, pendulating, vacile creature, who is ever poised between opposites, now vibrating to the right, and now to the left; now starting up the hill, and now starting down again; now "regurgitating, now retching;" the poor noodle, who pops the question and swoons before he gets the answer; who cries over spilled milk, and can't find any more; depend upon it, greatness waits not him. Such a human fungus may, by the eddy of circumstances, be tossed to eminence, but he certainly is not "to the manor born." Invincible curiosity, a riveted determination to rise higher, are a certain augury of success in any enterprise, and constitute the primary elements in all true human greatness. Inspired by a lofty curiosity, and an unyielding bend of will, man has penetrated the desert, driven back the sea, conquered climate, yoked the lightning to his fiery chariot, and left the marks of his pertinence and daring on the crest of the Andes and the Himalayas. In every pursuit our curiosity should be vital and unrelenting, and in the pursuit of knowledge that vitality should be doubly vital. Sir Isaac Newton once said, "That the secret of his great success consisted, perhaps, less in superior natural capacity, than in the power he had acquired of perseveringly pursuing his subject, until he hemmed it in a corner, and compelled it to surrender." On the thres-

hold of almost every new department of study, stands the sturdy sentinel—Difficulty, and he admits none who are not curious enough to find, wherein his great strength lieth, and wherewith he might be bound to thrash him.

Mirabeau, the great French politician, would never allow the word "impossible" to be pronounced in his presence; he would have had it struck from the language, if the fact could have disappeared along with it. "I make circumstances," said the First Napoleon, and, to use the antitheses of a celebrated orator; "Whether we find him in the field or in the drawing-room, with the mob or at the levee, wearing the Jacobin bonnet or the iron crown, banishing a Braganza or espousing a Hapsburg, dictating peace on a raft to the Czar of Russia, or viewing defeat at the gallows at Leipzig, he was the same curious, inscrutable, inflexible, unbending master of circumstances. And it was not, till he chanced to meet that most bony, sinewy circumstance which bore the name of Wellington, at Waterloo, that his proud spirit acknowledged fatigue, and bowed. So essential to a victorious curiosity is fixedness, in the whole round of its influences, that some have pronounced it synonymous with genius itself; and verily it is so indispensable, that genius would be little or nothing without it. And yet it would seem that almost anything is easier born, bred, and brought to maturity than this same essential to a successful curiosity. I seat myself,

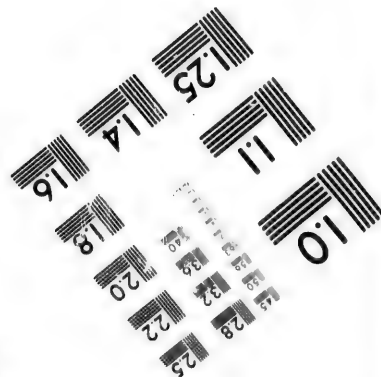
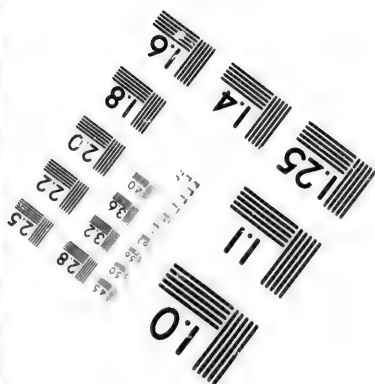
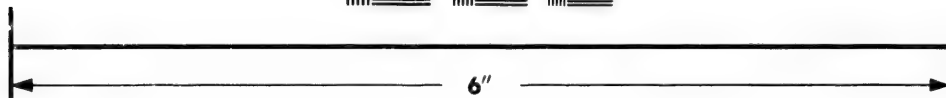
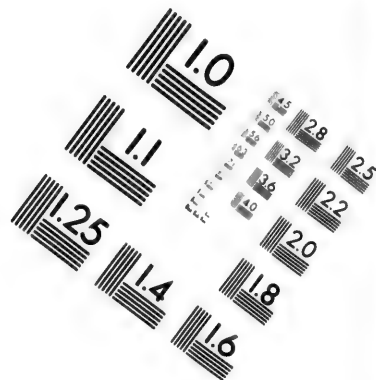
for instance, and I resolve that I will look directly into the eye of some master truth; that I will magnetize, and mesmerize, and call it mine. I do my best, but I blench, my eye rolls in a fine but liquid frenzy—the magnetist is magnetized, I yield the day. Nevertheless, my first effort has not been in vain, my curiosity is roused, I re-rally my energies, I bear down, a second time, upon the master truth, but a second time I am worsted. I take on strength, and all undaunted, I make a third attempt, and lo! in this attempt I conquer, he springs to my embrace, and I shout Eureka! This phase of the curious, which, however, I regret to say, does not at all frequently show itself, is, when in sight, an illustration of the mightiest force within these spheres. It would seem that no difficulty however formidable, that no barrier however insuperable, that no weapon however formed against it, that no arm however strong, can either intimidate, arrest, or retard a truly curious soul. The soul of a truly curious man is clothed as with thunder, and rejoiceth in its strength; it mocketh at fear and is not affrighted; the quiver of its foe rattleth against it in vain, the glittering spear and the shield. Its buckler is never broken, and its sword never returns empty. Clad in the panoply of an invulnerable purpose, it goes forth only to conquer, and its spoils are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The truly curious man is thus seen to be earnest, energetic, and unswerving in his aspirations and pursuits. He may be seam-faced

and battle-scarred ; he may bear the traces of many a hard encounter, but he leaves to the world and the centuries that which they will not willingly let die—a name and a deed.

Again, curiosity of this type, is ever voracious in its readings, and carries its inquisitiveness through all the avenues of literature ; and the truly curious man is ever a thoughtful and appreciative lover of books. Indeed, such an individual will regard full culture, mentally and morally, as impossible without the pabulum they alone can supply. And in passing, we may observe, that a life of immense power of thought and action is associated with books. It is unquestionably a fact, that no robust intellectual life can now be enjoyed without great indebtedness to them. And it is an inestimable advantage which books confer and which they are designed to afford, namely, the rousing of curiosity and independence to the highest effort. It is not always that a man can so stir the depths of his own being as to give him such vigorous, titanic movement as he might desire, and the material of a strong mental operation must be supplied from without. Books stimulate, enlarge, improve and empower the curious. The curiosity of some other soul has gone out, has made the circuit of its observation, and returns to lay its affluence of affection and thought, recollection and hope, at our feet. By contact with results of another's curiosity our own is excited, disenthralled, energized ; its old limits and bondage

crumble ; it steps out, becomes keener and more agile ; in short, it finds a new self, and puts off an old one. Others, in thus offering us the fruit of their toil, the extent of their mental worth, have revealed to us the worth, or worthlessness, of our own. Thus Plato is mightier than Cæsar, and the pen of the thinker than embattled battalions. Thrones and coronets, palaces and pyramids, rocks and mountains, are weaker than the world's best books. But a truly curious man is wary, and select in his questionings in the fields of literature. For, as in society, we have not only the virtuous and the vile, but the great, and alas ! the innumerable company of the very small ; so of books. We have the plebeian and the aristocratic ; the plain and the princely ; the weak and the powerful, and those full of regal splendor. An author presents us with a book ; that book tells us what he has asked for, the nature of his questions, the extent of his importunity, and what he has received as an answer. By the book, however, we may see who comes, the nature and range of his curiosity, and what, henceforth, we may expect from him.

By various authors, in various ages, in various lands, we have various books—some curious, some wanting curiosity altogether ; an echo, only that, and nothing more ! We have books elementary and disciplinary, books of history and travel, books of religion and philosophy, books of poetry and fiction, books of science and criticism, books professional, and books



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non-professional, books of art, and books of character, books upon books; new books and old books, books good, and books absolutely good for nothing. But as intimated, a thoroughly curious man knows the company he keeps, no less among authors than others; and walking with wise men, he becomes wise. Reading with him is a pleasure; it is more, it is a work; it is more, it is a herculean labor; and he comes to his book with a purpose, strong, determined, and persistent. He seeks his books in solitude, he questions it, demands its passport to his custody, cross-questions it; and it is only when it can tell whence it came, why it is here at all, whither it is bound—in short, it is only when it can account for its own pretensions, that he gives it a welcome at all. When he finds a book that is not a momentary growth, a mere efflorescence, but the sound result of close-bent, hard-strained, oft-foiled agony and effort, that it really is a somewhat, he earnestly, patiently, with oft-returning step seeks, its mastery and appropriation. Where the author toiled he toils, where the author groaned he groans, where the author writhed he agonizes. His object is power, it is enlargement, it is stability, it is conquest. His reading is, therefore, the mighty instrument by which he is to burst the limits of the present, and secure an ever-increasing vigour to his soul. He becomes the centre of public, boundless and eternal sympathies. In no circumscribed, partial or partizan spirit can he allow himself to live. He feels that a book, with truth

pulsing through it like a heart, is mighty in catholicity, and catholicizes himself. It may be indigenous to the consecrated heights of intellectual writing, or it may be a tissue of the hard logic of facts, or it may deal with the more spiritual crystallizations of thought and poetry, all are as one, if truth be there; if not, he waves his avoirdupois. Being in quest of truth, he will have it, or nothing. I have somewhere read, that the celebrated Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was wont to divide readers into four classes. "The first," says he, "may be compared to an hour glass, their reading being as the sand; it runs in, and runs out, and leaves not a vestige behind. A second class resembles a sponge, which imbibes everything, and returns it in nearly the same state—only a little dirtier. The third class is like a jelly bag, which allows all that is pure to pass away, and retains only the refuse and the dregs. The fourth class may be compared to the slave in the diamond caves or mines of Golconda, who, casting aside all that is worthless, preserves only the pure gem." Our truly curious man is of the last mentioned class; a toiler he may be, yea, a very slave to the acquisition of knowledge, but being such, he knows the gem from the alloy, the virgin gold from the surrounding quartz. He never mistakes the copper for the gold, the chaff for the wheat, the shadow for the substance, the sham for the reality. But having found, in his wide and various readings, that of which he was in quest, he utilizes it, and with a legitimate economy, he

makes it the stepping-stone to a higher power. Thus the truly curious man is ever a keenly-appetized and voracious reader. Hence it is, that whenever we find a wise lover of books, we find in that same, most pleasing evidences of self-improving character.

But curiosity is not only a gormand on books, but is also a most vigilant, wide-awake observer ; nothing escapes its note, nothing evades its grasp ; it goes forth to see with its eyes, to hear with its ears, to handle, to understand, to embrace. Nature is not a blank, but has something written upon every page,—and what is written, shall it not be read ? Curiosity deciphers the handwriting, puts this with that, and out of what, to the uncurious, is chaos and contradiction, it brings the symmetry of one harmonious whole. It emphatically “finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything.” Nature is to it a treasure-house, garnished and adorned, yea, and full to repletion, with all that is calculated to excite thought, awaken interest, and enlarge man. Hence, a truly curious man is ever on familiar terms with nature, he questions it as an old acquaintance, and nature honors the drafts of his curiosity. Nature, and a curious man were evidently formed for each other not only because nature attracts the mind toward itself, not only because the mind is drawn involuntarily to the love and study of the sublime and beautiful, but that both involve in their very existence the elements of perpetual change. The very

order of nature, and the harmonies which it exhibits, are all the result of change; and the truly curious questioner has followed, marking every step, and rejoicing in every new phase and development. His mind converts all objects, all periods, and all changes into sources of profound interest. If he dig into the depth of the earth, shut out from all that may delight the eye, wonders upon wonders still follow him into the deep, dark chasm. He feels that every stratum of earthly substance through which he passes is big with histories of the past, speaking to him in the sullen silence of periods in the eternity of time to which the date of our race bears but a feeble comparison. He can see traces of forms and life with which the earth and ocean once teemed, which, after ages of duration, were crushed and extinguished by some huge convulsion of the mighty fabric, or changed by new combinations of matter. There come before him proofs of each succeeding order of creation, which, like mountain rising upon mountain in some gorgeous scene, take their places in the universal scheme, ascending from lower to higher, till that summit is attained which now forms the groundwork of this new and interesting theatre of life. He finds enough at every step, in every sound, in every object, to rivet his attention and engross his understanding. If his foot come in contact with a stone and he experience ever so painful a sensation, he despises not even that stone; it may be he picks it up, turns it over, pierces the enveloping lamina,

peels off the rough incrustation, is determined to see the heart of the stone, which he finds to be a gem of purest ray.

Thus the very stone which the uncurious would have thrown aside, as rough, unseemly, uncouth, and a nuisance ; receiving at the hands of the curious the true cleavage, is found to flash with untold value. The secluded lane with its green hedge-rows, has for the curious the deepest interest, and material for the feast of after-thought. It furnishes data for marking the changes as to country as well as town, and opens the mind to an appreciation of nature's fairest charms. And how frequently has the truly curious man found the elements of truest beauty, richest fragrance and most abiding satisfaction in these his interviews with nature ? The simplest and wildest form of vegetable life under his eye, have been found to contain odors and essences, and properties and powers which the uncurious had neither seen nor conjectured. And thus, through all the avenues of thought and consciousness, the truly curious observer is day by day regaled and gladdened, and is enabled to take on new strength, and secure the resources of ever-new delight. Anxious to learn, to know more and more, there is never a point gained at which he desires to stay ; he is passing on to see more, to hear more, to feel more, to become wiser and wiser, better and better—he goes from strength to strength, until he arrives at the perfect, standard of the man.

What sublime illustrations we have of this fact in the lives of the world's most curious men! You take, for example, Sir Isaac Newton; being possessed of a most curious and inquisitive soul, he is ever awake, ever on the alert—watching fact, watching phenomena, watching by night, watching by day! He sees an apple fall from its parent stem—he marks that fall; he asks, Why does it fall? Why, if rent from the tree, does it not ascend with equal propriety, as descend? Why descend invariably? He pursues the question, he presses it on this side and that side, he rises above it, he descends beneath it, he crowds it, he “hems it in a corner,” and, to use his own language, he “compels it to surrender,” and we have as the magnificent result, the declaration of a law, which henceforth, and to the end of time, shall be known as the “Law of Gravitation.” The simple, casual falling of an apple, followed by his curious soul to its ultimate issues, becomes the key by which the portals of the highest, deepest, most sacred mysteries of nature are unlocked, and we all are permitted to reason to the extent of our ability on nature as one stupenduous whole. The sun is no longer a mere luminary, but a great, fixed, all-controlling centre, having gravity, and holding in bonds of sweetest captivity other suns and satellites, planets and systems. We also find that touching the earth, its round of tendencies are to the centre, so that could you bore a hole through it—had you a hollow diameter through the earth, and were to cast another

apple into it, that other apple having fallen down past the centre, it would fall up again, and would never, and could never, fall through. Now, the unfolding, the rationale of this all-prevading law, is due to the falling of an apple, witnessed by a curious soul, whose eye went on to sweep the heavens and the earth with its imperial glance, leaving us to wonder how it achieved so much.

Or, you take another instance : you have a Scottish stonemason, and a right royal, curious soul has he. His, too, is an observant eye. While one day chipping and chiseling on a piece of old red sandstone, he alights upon a somewhat peculiar fossil, he notes it, questions it, demands and obtains its answer. He finds an unwritten history in its every aspect, he continues to interrogate ; he urges his way from quarry to quarry ; he questions the rocks, he reiterates his appeal, argument rises on argument, until, in the sublime sequences we find the old red sandstone vocal, and every hill and dale bearing the impress of its Creator's footsteps. This inquisitive soul, pushes its queries, and that with such pertinacity that the rock-ribbed earth, through all its rocky realms and kingdoms, bears loudest and gladdest "testimony" to its Great Architect. And Hugh Miller's name stands out to show, that "Rank is but the guinea's stamp, the man's the man, for a' that." Take again, the celebrated James Watt. As a boy even, he evinces a most curious, far-seeing soul, and prys alike into optics and

astronomy, botany and physiology, history and antiquarianism, harmonics and steam-power; and so profound were his researches in the latter field, that to him primarily is due the honor of giving to the world that marvellous revolutionizer of labor—the condensing steam-engine. Or, again, the renowned George Stephenson, who measured his strength with the all but insuperable difficulty of abridging distances at the rate of thirty miles an hour. His curious soul has already gone out in quest of new and wide-bearing facts, he propounds, his belief in the possibility of carrying out all he has conceived—locomotion at thirty miles an hour. He was confronted by prejudice, assailed by doubt; he became the object of contumely and derision. His railway company declared, “that if he estimated the speed of his engines at more than ten miles an hour, he would ruin the company’s prospects, and qualify himself for a cell in Bedlam.” The *Quarterly Review* entered the lists against him, and that with the utmost asperity. “What,” said the writer, “what can be more palpably absurd and ridiculous, than the prospect held out of locomotives travelling twice as fast as coaches? We should as soon think of the people of Woolwich suffering themselves to be fired off upon one of Congreve’s rockets, as trust themselves at the mercy of such a machine, going at such a rate. We will back old Father Thames against the Woolwich railway for any sum. Parliament will surely limit the speed to eight

miles an hour, for, we agree with Mr. Sylvester, that that is all that can be ventured on with safety." In scientific circles he was spoken of as that "unprofessional person," as "that man of wild schemes;" while the learned Baron Alderson declared that Stephenson's was "the most absurd scheme that it ever entered the head of man to conceive." Many such battles had Stephenson to fight single-handed, but being a truly curious man, he fought on; and, "neither abuse, nor sarcasm, nor cajolery, nor piteous howling could move him." He simply smiled, and smiled, and went right on. And to his curious persistency, his indomitable perseverance, we are indebted for that network of railways which has brought the very ends of the world into neighborhood. . . . A young and ardently curious American, in the simple act of flying a kite, finds out a new fact, new at least in the sense of being utile; he looks into that fact; strongly questions it, and so persistent are his interrogatories, that the very lightnings say to him, "Here are we." From that moment a new science is evolved, and electricity becomes a power by which the oriental and occidental are brought within speaking distance. But who can forget, while, no longer pendant on restive horses and miry clay, while the very lightnings, obedient to the voice of science, have become the winged couriers of thought, the messengers of the million. I say, who can forget that to the curious soul of Benjamin Franklin we owe the palm of the achievement?

And thus I might go on, adding name to name; the list is long, magnificent, deathless. Science, philosophy, poetry, history, theology, ethics, and simple labor; all have their illustrious names, their records of the successfully curious and inquisitive.

But there is another point worthy of note; not only do curious, inquisitive, toiling and successful men accomplish much for the race, in opening new fountains of interest, new spheres of activity, new sources of strength, not only do they mitigate wrong, assuage suffering, lessen the burdens of life, and pave the way to the ultimate restoration of their kind; but they, in their turn become objects of as deep, and wise a curiosity as any, or all they may have opened to us. Hence, with what fondness do we pore over the doings of the world's benefactors. And at the mention of their names, how are we thrilled with feelings more profound than all that is vast in the material world can produce. We ponder their history, we bend over their urns, we mark their struggles as recorded by reverent hand, "Even from the tomb their nature cries, Even in their ashes live their wonted fires." We visit the place of their birth, the scene of their action; the ground upon which they stood becomes classic and sacred, and their names live for evermore. Who, for instance, that visits Stratford, does not seek to see where Shakespeare was born, and where he lies in death? Who that has ever visited that curious sepulchre of the curious—Westminster Abbey—has

not experienced all those strange indefinable emotions, peculiar only to the arena of death, and the shades of the mighty dead? With what curious, questioning interest we visit the tombs of the fathers of our curiosity, and linger to look again upon their placid shrines! With, for instance, what curiosity you visit St. Paul's, and yet it is only the monumental expression of the curiosity of Sir Christopher Wren. You take the "*Principia*" of Newton; the "*Novum Organum*" of Bacon; the "*dramas*" of Shakespeare; the "*Paradise Lost*" of Milton; the "*Inferno*" of Dante; you take the doings of the poets, orators, statesmen and divines, of all ages, and what are they all, but the embodied expressions of a high, masterful, and imperial curiosity?



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